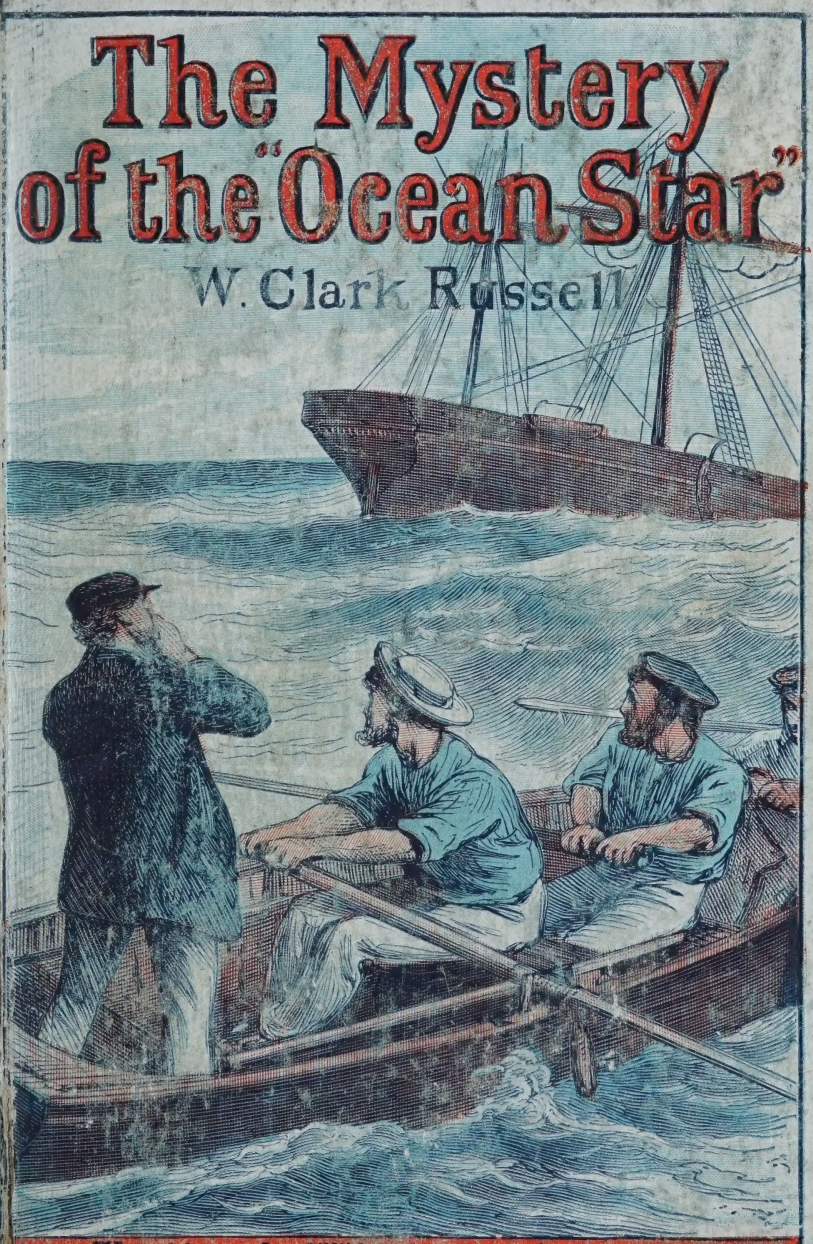
The Mystery of the "Ocean Star"

W. Clark Russell



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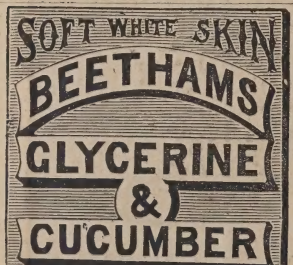

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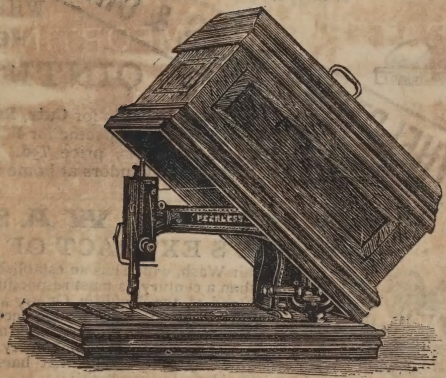

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London

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1890

William Clark Russell (1844-) was born in New York. This volume is a collection of tales and sketches contributed to various journals and magazines. First issued in 1888.

PREFACE.

This collection makes the sixth annual volume of Mr. Clark Russell's contributions to the public journals and the monthly magazines. These works form a marine encyclopædia in which almost every subject of interest connected with the British Mercantile Marine will be found dealt with more or less at large. The six volumes therefore may justly lay claim to a unique position in current literature. They abound with stories, many of them of an exciting nature, besides illustrating the multifarious experiences of the large number of seafaring people with whom the author has conversed, or with whom he has been professionally associated. The cordial reception accorded to Mr. Clark Russell's previous collections justifies the publishers in anticipating an equally favourable verdict upon this latest issue of his miscellaneous writings.

THE PUBLISHERS.

214, Piccadilly, W.,
July, 1888.

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THE MYSTERY OF THE "OCEAN STAR."

On the 22nd of August in the year 1877, a steamer named the *Guide*, of about twelve hundred tons burden, was in latitude 12° North and in longitude 31° West. The weather, during the last twenty-four hours, had been curious. The north-east trade wind had two days earlier fined down into a faint draught, and then for a spell all the breeze that the vessel found she made for herself. There was a long swell from the westward, which came along in slopes of liquid violet, so polished that the glory of the sunshine slipped from one deeply dark-blue brow to another, as though indeed it were a substantial gushing of fiery gold sliding over the heads of rolling hills of glass. The oddness of the weather lay in peculiar appearances of snow-white vapour low down upon the sea. The atmosphere was brilliantly clear, the sky a hard pale blue, brightening into the needle-like scintillations of new tin as it swept out of a bald brassy dye round about the sun to the sheer white dazzle of the luminary; and where the line of the horizon was visible the rim of the waving circle was as sharp and defined as tinted crystal against the airy softness of the heavens. Nevertheless these fog-banks hung about the deep in many directions, some curved like great pinions, some in rolls, low-lying, like to the

folds of dark smoke which linger on the waters of the English Channel in the hush of a summer's day, some like vast sheets of satin shot with the lustrous colourings you notice in cobwebs or the inside of oyster-shells. Whenever the steamer swept into one of them her quarter-deck, and the white boats amidships, and the glass of her skylights and all the brass-work about her abaft her funnel, would be in splendour, whilst forward she had disappeared as completely as if she had been sawn in twain. Then perhaps for the space of twenty minutes she would be in a sort of eclipse, a deeper silence upon the white air as though the steam-like smother held a stillness of its own, her forecastle scarce visible from the bridge, the smoke from her funnel following like a shadow of thunder-cloud in the glistening void; and regularly as she drove into these spacious, seemingly motionless, bodies the blasts of her steam-horn fled ahead like yells startled out of her sentience by terror of the swift transformations of the splendour of the tropical day into the moonlike blindness of the fog. For certainly it was impossible to know but that in one or another of the banks a ship lay stagnated; and, though the engines were never slowed, the ears upon the bridge were held strained until the steamer had leaped on a sudden out of the white twilight into the golden day again.

It was about eleven o'clock in the forenoon; the whole length of the *Guide* had barely steamed out clear from one of the largest of the low clouds when the chief officer sighted a sail four points on the port bow. She lay some five miles distant, in a wide and shining channel betwixt two great bodies of vapour, and resembled a piece of ivory-work in the searching light. The mate directed the captain's attention to her.

"Yes, sir; and I hope if there are others about they'll be as easy to see." He brought a glass from the chart-house and levelled it. He worked away for some time without speaking, and then handing the telescope to the chief mate, he said, "Mr. Williams, there's something wrong with that vessel."

Indeed, it scarcely needed a sailor's eye to suspect something amiss. She was a small barque, apparently between three hundred and fifty and four hundred tons; she had a main skysail mast, and all her spars were aloft and everthing right in that way; but the appearance of her canvas suggested disorder and confusion. Halliards fore and aft seemed to have been let go on a sudden, and nothing else done. Upper topsail, topgallant—in short, all yards which travelled were down, but no sail was clewed up. The foresail, the lower topsails, mainsail, and spanker were set; but staysails and jibs, most of them, lay half up and down the stays they belonged to; the yards were braced forward on the starboard tack. These features the glass rendered easily distinguishable.

"Now, what on earth can that muddle signify?" exclaimed the captain, with his face full of curiosity. "You'd imagine there was a heavy squall coming down upon her, that her skipper had sung out to let go everything, and that the crew, after doing so, had gone to dinner. See anything like a colour flying, Mr. Williams?"

The mate looked and answered, "No. Appears to me like a mutiny, sir," he continued. "Or if it isn't that, then it'll be sickness. Hold chock-a-block with green coffee, perhaps, and the fo'ksle full of fever. Or suppose you reckon it's blindness, sir? I've heard of such a thing as a whole ship's company losing their sight."

"Well, let's go and have a look at her," said the captain. "No use speculating on objects at sea. If there'd been a little more shifting of courses there'd be fewer marine wonders, I allow." He spoke to the helmsman, and the steamer's head was put for the barque.

She was rolling to the run of the swell, and the swinging of the canvas flung a hurry of shadowing over her. The quiet vaporous shapes on either hand, like islands clad in mist, with the wide dark-blue channel between them upon which the fabric, made dainty by distance, swayed the silver buttons of her trucks in a delicate limning, as you might have thought, of the azure canvas above, made the picture a fine one. The heave of the water was without a wrinkle, and the eye sought the whole circumference of the horizon in vain for the blurr of a catspaw. As she was approached, points which distance had subdued or hidden stole out upon the naked sight; such as that she was painted green, with a narrow white band running the length of her, that she had a white figure-head and an elliptical stern, after the mould of the Aberdeen clippers; that she was metalled high with new sheathing, which, to each sway of the swell, flashed out a wet coppery light that was like the momentary glance of a beam of the setting sun upon the translucency under the bends.

"There's nothing wanting in her that I can see," said the captain, talking with his eye at the glass. "Masthead those yards and trim them, and she'd be as pretty a little ship as ever I recollect seeing. What can be her people's object in leaving her in that condition? Certainly not a rope's been touched since I've been looking at her," he continued, inspecting her; then handing the glass to the mate, he said, "Isn't there smoke coming out of her galley chimney? My sight's not what it was."

Mr. Williams peered and said, "Yes, that's smoke, right enough. If her galley fire's alight she's not deserted. Yet I don't see the least sign of any living being aboard either. Never so much as a man's head, sir. Very odd, to be sure."

"She seems to have all her boats," said the captain.

"I can't be certain," answered the mate. "Looks to me as if her starboard davits were empty; but her spanker's in the road of my sight."

They fell silent, the steamer's engines were slowed, and she floated leisurely down upon the barque, and when within easy hail she was stopped. The derelict, if such she were, was a very visible object now. Her wheel, standing nakedly, revolved to right or left with the swaying of the rudder to the blows of the swell. An element of solemnity was imparted to the flapping noises of the canvas and the grinding and creaking sounds breaking from the hull and structure aloft by the striking of a bell at intervals sufficiently measured to render the notes funereal in their way. All hands aboard the steamer leaned over the rail gazing at the barque, and you marked the working of salt superstitious instincts in more than one mahogany countenance as the vibratory chime of the hidden bell aboard the tenantless vessel drove thinly musical through the still atmosphere.

"It'll be the rolling that keeps that bell going," said the captain; "but it's a sound to make a man feel clammy." He put both hands, hollowed, to his mouth, and roared out, in a hurricane note, "Barque ahoy!"

There was no response. Every eye searched each fathom of the vessel's length, but nothing stirred save the shadows. That which filled everybody with wonder was that there should be smoke filtering from the galley

chimney, proving the galley fire to be alight, and yet nobody to show himself.

"If she's abandoned, sir," said the mate, "her people can't have been long gone; yonder smoke proves that. They ought to be within sight" (he sent a long look around), "unless," he added, "they're buried in one of those banks."

By this time the steamer had insensibly glided forwards so as to open the starboard side of the barque, and it was then seen, as the mate had said, that one of her boats was gone; the davits were slued out and the falls overhauled to the water's edge with the blocks dipping to the roll of the vessel. Her name was also visible, written in bold letters on her stern, *Ocean Star*.

"Better go aboard and see what's the matter, Mr. Williams," said the captain. "Pity some wind don't come along and blow those clouds away. The crew may be hidden in one of them, as you say; but it's an unintelligible job, if ever there was one. Haul taut on your nerve-tackles, sir, for there may be an ugly sight to greet ye."

A boat was got over, and four men rowed the chief officer to the barque. The men tugging at the oars were incessantly looking past their shoulders, so confounded were they by the sight of the smoke going straight up out of the galley chimney, and by the absence of life, which the spectacle of the smoke accentuated to their dull unlettered understandings; as if in truth the vessel were manned by viewless mariners who watched their approach, phantom-like, from the bulwark rail.

"In oars!" A boat-hook cleverly caught a mizen-channel-plate, and in a trice Mr. Williams, followed by a couple of hands, gained the deck. The captain's hint

had prepared the mate's mind, and he gazed about him for something horrible. There was nothing at all, however, in that way to be seen. Indeed, there was no further confusion than ends of ropes lying about, coils of halliards which had been lifted off the pins and thrown down, and let go in a hurry and left to lie, as much of them as remained when the yards were down. She was a snug, clean vessel, decks of a good colour, paintwork fresh, brasswork bright, flush fore and aft, and the furniture—such as the binnacles, pumps, capstan, skylights, companions, and so forth—excellent in their kind.

"Nothing wrong above-board anyhow," said the mate; "if there's anything in the creeping line it'll be below."

There were some cocks and hens in a coop forward gaping with thirst. The mate dropped the dipper into the scuttle-butt and filled their trough, and the creatures drank with extraordinary demonstrations of pious thanksgiving in their manner of looking aloft to let the water drain down. There had been a pig under the long-boat, but he was gone. There was nothing alive but the cocks and hens. The mate looked about him for the sounding-rod, and finding it, sounded the well, and found the barque as free as the steamer was. He made the tour of the deck, followed by the men, one of whom smothered the tongue of the bell with some yarns, peering eagerly as he went, never knowing but that the next step would bring him to a dead man in the wake of a mast, or concealed by a bulwark stanchion and the gear about it; but the decks were as free of the dead as the living. He looked into the galley and found a good fire burning; so good that both he and the others agreed that it must have been made up afresh *within the time*

the *Guide* had first sighted the vessel, for the coals were spitting out gas flames, and burned as fresh as coals do. There was a large saucepan boiling on the fire, and on lifting the lid and looking in they spied a fowl clumsily plucked. The mate started and stared at the others.

"There must be men aboard," he cried; "you want no better proof than this. If they made off at sight of us where's their boat? They wouldn't have had time to fetch the nearest of those fog-banks. No, we must have seen 'em. And why should they have wanted to make off? What was there to frighten 'em overboard in the sighting of our steamer? Depend upon it they're aboard—below—in hiding; but, great thunder? *what for?*"

"Will you search the ship?" said one of the men.

"Certainly."

"Stand by, sir; there may be some bloomin' roose in this business."

"Follow or stay as you please," said the mate; "I have my orders." With which he walked to the companion hatch and descended the steps. The others followed. Mr. Williams was a stout-hearted man, nevertheless he entered the cabin with extreme caution, stepping very slowly, with his eyes starting from his head. The seeing nothing to account for the mystery of this barque's situation astonished and dismayed him more than had he encountered a terribly tragic solution of the riddle. The cabin was a pleasant, clean, sunny apartment, with a table amidships, lockers stuffed with hair on either hand, a handsome silver-plated lamp over the table, a few hanging shelves with books and other such matters. There were four small cabins abaft, which the mate entered, and in the sternmost one, presumably the captain's, he found, besides chronometers,

a sextant, a log-book, charts and the like, the ship's papers, which proclaimed the vessel to be the *Ocean Star*, of Hull, bound to Rio with a general cargo. He examined the log, but the last entry was dated ten days before. This was a circumstance to prodigiously increase Mr. Williams's perplexment. He inspected the other cabins and found them mere sleeping-places, each with its bunks and bedding and chest of clothes. There was nobody here—nothing living or dead—though the two foremost cabins exhibited signs of having quite recently been occupied.

The mate, accompanied by his two men, went on deck again, walked forward and entered the forecastle; but they first looked down the scuttle and spied a light.

"Ha!" cried Mr. Williams, "they're here then."

He put his head into the hatch and sang out, "Below there!" No answer. "Below there, I say!" His voice sank dead into the gloom, and no reply followed. He hailed a third time: "Anybody below there?" and obtaining no response, lost his patience, put his legs into the hatch and dropped. The light was made by a slush lamp swinging under a blackened beam. There were four hammocks stretched under the upper deck, and a few bunks going into the bows. You would have concluded that the crew had all turned in after eating; for there was a mess-kid upon the deck with the remains of a piece of beef in it; here and there a pannikin stood upon a chest, and the roving and perplexed eyes of the mate fastened upon a broken pipe, bits of sea-bread, stray shoes and boots, oilskins hanging by nails, and other well-known items of the furniture of Jack's ocean parlour. He punched the hammocks, there was nothing in them; he examined the bunks, they too were untenanted.

"This beats all my goin' a-fishin'!" exclaimed one of the men.

"Nothin's wanted but a flavey o' sulphur to make me reckon that the Devil's got charge here," said the other.

"Put that light out, one of you," said the mate, and they returned on deck and got into their boat.

"Well?" said the captain, as Mr. Williams stepped over the side.

"Well, sir," replied the mate, "I've thoroughly overhauled her and there's no one on board. Nothing alive but some cocks and hens. She's the *Ocean Star*, of Hull," and here he acquainted the captain with the contents of the ship's papers, "and she should be worth as she stands a tidy lump of money. She's sound as a bell, and as dry as the inside of a chimney."

"And no hint to be found as to what's become of her people?"

"Ne'er a hint, sir, barring those empty starboard davits. I'd believe her crew had left her in that boat, only what are you to make of the galley fire being alight, a fowl cooking in a saucepan on it—actually boiling as it might be for a man's dinner—and to complete the blessed wonder, sir, the forecastle slush-lamp burning!"

"There *must* be somebody aboard," exclaimed the captain. "Fowls aren't such fools as to pluck and boil themselves. No, sir; there's a man or men aboard, and you've missed 'em."

"They may have slipped into the lazarette or down the forepeak," answered the mate. "I didn't look, and so I can't say. But as the hatches are on, with tarpaulins over them, I'm willing to bet all that I'm worth, after searching as I did, that there's no human being in that barque."

The steamer was brigantine-rigged, with a topgallant-

yard. The captain, calling to one of the men who was known to possess the best pair of eyes in the ship's company, sent him aloft with a binocular glass with instructions to carefully search the sea in every quarter for any appearance of a boat. By this time a small air was blowing out of the south-east, with just enough of weight in it to deepen the shade of the blue and to put a little curl upon the windward slopes of the swell. Here and there the fog banks had thinned, and they were now all under way, steering north-west, so that if any one of them concealed a boat she was bound to draw out clear presently, unless the crew rowed that they might keep the vapour about them—a ridiculous supposition. But although the man on the steamer's topgallant-yard swept the water with the intentness of a shipwrecked soul, he remained mute. The fact was, there was nothing to see; and after staying aloft ten minutes, during which time everybody on deck stared his hardest too, he cried out, "There's nothen in sight, sir," and came down.

"Well, it's a blazing mystery, certainly," exclaimed the captain of the *Guide*. "But you'll find I'm right—there are people loafing somewhere aboard; though why they shouldn't show themselves let him tell us who can find out. But let that be as it will, it won't do to let that fine vessel knock about here and perhaps go to the bottom in the next gale of wind." He called the second officer, a man named Matthews, on to the bridge. "Will ye take charge of that barque, Mr. Matthews, and carry her to Rio? It isn't far off."

"Yes, sir," answered the second mate, promptly.

"You shall have three men—can't spare more; but they'll suffice, considering what part of the ocean this is, if you keep her under easy canvas."

"I'll manage," said Mr. Matthews.

"It's a job to tassel your pockethandkerchief with dollars, and the mate reports a big harness cask and two scuttle-butts. Overhaul her for stores when ye get aboard, and let me know before we proceed."

"Ay, ay, sir."

"I expect you'll find a man or two skulking. There's a fowl boiling, and Mr. Williams had to put the forecastle lamp out. This is the age of steam-engines, and there's no witchcraft left, so look for the people for whom that fowl's cooking; they'll strengthen your crew. Muster the men, Mr. Williams, and ask for volunteers, whilst Mr. Matthews gets his duds together."

This was done; several men offered, and three likely fellows were chosen. One was a trimmer, the others sailors. They were not perfectly happy in their minds, but the seaman's love of change, coupled with the prospect of salvage-money, was too strong for superstition. In a few minutes they pitched their bags into the boat, the second mate followed, and a couple of the steamer's men rowed them aboard the barque. Before touching a rope they went to work to search the ship. They lifted the hatches and found the hold full of cargo. The second mate, as fearless a sailor as ever jockeyed a yardarm, crawled about with a lantern but unearthed nothing mortal. They searched the forepeak and afterwards the lazarette, in which they met with abundance of stores—beef, pork, peas, flour, lime-juice, rum, and the like; then, having rummaged with the pertinacity of Customs officers, they went on deck, grimy with sweat and dirt, and the second mate hailed the steamer.

"Hilloh!"

"Plenty of stores and fresh water, sir."

"Right."

"Cargo almost flush with the main hatch, sir."

"Right."

"No signs of the crew anywhere. We've crawled into every hole and there's nothing alive aboard the *Ocean Star* excepting ourselves and the chickens."

"Right!" shouted the captain for the third time. He flourished a farewell with his arm; the mate waved his hand, and there was a graceful salutation of several sorts of caps over the rail forward. The propeller revolved, the steamer gathered way, and the slender crew of the *Ocean Star* were left to shift for themselves.

The light breeze hung steady, and there floated up from alongside the laughing fountainlike music of rippling waters, sweet to the ear as an ice-cold draught to the palate after the sickly silence of a long spell of tropical calm. The men seized hold of the halliards and hoisted the yards, one after another, crowning the white and graceful superstructure by the tiny main skysail, that gleamed like a star under the blue. A glance at the chart gave Mr. Matthews his course, and presently the barque, with a little silver curl under either bow, and the shadow of one sail lying in a dainty curve in the hollow of another, and a flashing as of musketry breaking from the glass and brass upon her as she leaned with the swell to the sun, was sliding quietly southwards, with the steamer already toylike in the distance and the fogbanks lifting into the haze. No one had thought of removing the saucepan in the galley, and when they examined it they found the fowl boiled into soup. This they threw overboard; nor, had the fowl been dressed to a hair, is it conceivable that their imaginations would have suffered them to put their lips to it. The truth is, the more they turned

the matter over the more mystifying it grew. That a handsome little barque in good trim, with plenty to eat and drink aboard, her hold full of valuable cargo, not a drop of water draining into her in the twenty-four hours—that such a ship should be found abandoned, floating about as if she were no better than a timber-craft with her decks blown up and her covering-board awash, was strange enough to be sure, but not so surprising as not to be fitted with some kind of yarn tolerably answerable to the circumstance. But what was to be made of the mystery of a vessel that exhibited the most certain signs imaginable of human life being aboard, and that was yet as tenantless as a newly dug grave? There was the galley fire burning, there had been the saucepan bubbling and the fowl boiling, and the slush-lamp in the forecastle flaming. This meant very recent work. The slush-lamp, to be sure, might have been alight for some hours, but the freshly fed appearance of the fire and the saucepan and the fowl signified that there must have been mortal hands at work quite lately—undoubtedly *within* the time since the *Guide* had first sighted the *Ocean Star*. A boat was missing. If the crew had gone away in her since the fire had been fed and the fowl had been put on to cook, they could not in so short a period have rowed out of sight of the steamer's people. Where, then, were they? Had all hands jumped overboard on the smoke of the *Guide* showing on the northern horizon? But a theory of general suicide would still further bewilder the problem of the galley fire on to which coals must certainly have been shovelled some while after the steamer had hove into view.

One man stood at the wheel, the other hung with the second mate near him, and they argued, speculated,

reasoned—to no purpose. They took the trouble to search the ship afresh after dinner, with no other result than to positively confirm the assurance their earlier seeking had obtained for them, that no living man but themselves was on board.

"Well, sir," said the trimmer, addressing Mr. Matthews, as the three of them came together again at the wheel, "I don't profess to no book-learning, but I knows the difference twixt a sprat and a porcupine, and my notion's this: since no man's hands made up that there fire and put the hen on to bile, somebody else must ha' done it."

"Who else?" inquired the second mate.

The fellow gazed at him stupidly for a minute, and then said, "Well, a ghost."

"What's a ghost, Billy?" asked one of the other men.

"Something ye can't catch hold of, nor'd be able to sit upon, if so be as you was to get him down," answered the trimmer, defiantly. "No use raysoning there ain't no ghosts, for scores have been seen and spoke to; 'sides, if there warn't no ghosts there'd be no future, the future's meant for the likes o' them. Denying of ghosts is the same as denying of salvagion."

"Have ghosts got any stomachs?" demanded the second mate.

The trimmer reflected, and said, "No, they can't have no stomachs if they can be walked through."

"Then what should a ghost go and cook a fowl for?" said the second mate.

The trimmer made no answer, and the subject dropped.

Long ere the dusk came the ocean had opened in blue radiance to the far sky. The second mate went

aloft with the barque's telescope to as high as the main-royal yard, but saw nothing. The speed of the vessel was barely three miles an hour; the breeze was languid and hot, and the burning sun poised, rayless and huge in the western quarter, seemed to be drying up even this small movement of life in the atmosphere. Indeed, when the darkness came it fell stark calm again. The stars, the fitful flashings of phosphorus in the water over the side, the vast oceanic hush, the soft winnowing sounds of canvas in the darkness on high, like the stirring of hidden giant pinions, were elements of the night-scene to help whatever emotions superstition might have engendered, and even the practical second mate felt the subduing influence of points which on any other occasion he would have had scarce an eye or ear for, when his mind went to the mystery of this deserted barque. The men flatly declined to use the forecastle.

"'Tain't," said one of them, "that I'm like Billy, sir, and believes in ghosts. But until this here traverse has been worked out I'd rather lay on deck. Them hammocks has an onpleasant look . . . and the vessel being desarted, who could have lighted the fo'ksle lamp?"

They divided themselves into watches, and used the cabin to lie in. They broached a rum-cask in the lazarette and made themselves a cheerful bowl, and the drink did their imaginations good. Moreover, the second mate helped them yet by bidding them fix their minds on the money they were bound to take up when the salvage claim had been settled; yet for all that they hung together. Two kept the deck whilst the others lay down, and whilst one of the two on duty stood at the wheel the other kept close beside him. The truth is, none of them could feel certain that the ship

was empty of all but themselves, spite of their repeated search; and this mere notion was enough to breed uneasiness, to render the movement of a shadow startling, to keep their eyes travelling along the decks and up aloft.

"What's a worritting me's this, sir," said the trimmer. "Here's a job as may never be 'splained."

"Well, *I* can't fit any sense to it, for one," answered Mr. Matthews. "A single corpse would have made the matter intelligible; but to find the galley fire burning, the fowl cooking, the fo'ksle lamp alight, and no one aboard, and no boat in sight—No! there's nothing to be made of it by thinking. It'll have to be a riddle without an answer."

"Providing you don't sarch the soopernatural first," said the trimmer.

The second mate called a sea-blessing upon the fool's head, and fell a whistling for wind.

In the morning watch a light air came along right over the stern; they squared the yards, and the *Ocean Star* began to move again. The sun rose, and the day broke in glory, the sea a surface of wrinkled sapphire, the heavens lifting from pale blue at the horizon to violet at the zenith, here and there a cloud shining like a wind-gall, and the small breeze fiery. The second mate, glancing about him, spied something white shine gleaming over the starboard bow. He fetched the glass and looked. It might have passed for some topmost-sail of a ship hull down behind the sea-line, trembling in the swimming hot refraction that hove it up as a thing apart. But the keen eye of the sailor knew better. What he saw was not a ship's sail, and without a word he mounted to the upper main-topsail yard, and there made out the object to be a boat, with apparently a

shirt or two lifted as a signal or a sail. So weak was the wind that a long hour went by before the boat could be seen clearly with the eye; but ere this the telescope had detected the presence of several men in her, and the wet sparkle of oars, and the disappearance of what had served for a sail, showed them to be rowing towards the barque. The second mate looked from the boat upon the water to the port-quarter boat hanging griped at the davits, and exclaimed, "I'm a Dutchman if those men there are not the barque's crew!" The others peered and agreed, for both boats were alike—white, of a whaling pattern, and a couple of black disks painted on the bows. The barque was headed directly for the poor fellows, and a man stood ready to heave a line to them. The laboured, languid movement of the oars sufficiently marked their condition. It was like the action of the antennæ of some dying insect, and more pathetic than a cry of suffering. The boat approached, the men pulled in their oars, and fell to gesticulating, making many piteous motions of entreaty, and pointing to their mouths.

"They want water!" exclaimed the mate, breathlessly.

The coil of line was thrown: one in the bows caught it with trembling hands and took a turn round a thwart with it, and then stumbled, nor did he seem able to rise, though he held to the line with the tenacity of a dying grip. There were four of them, and they were so weak that they had to be lifted over the side. Coleridge speaks of thirst making a man grin. The torment in these poor creatures had wrought an uglier distortion of countenance even than the simulation of mirth in anguish, and their sole gasp was, "Water!" as they sank down upon the hot deck with lips as white as the

planks, and froth like sea-foam oozing from the corners of their mouths.

It was some hours before any one of them was fit to tell the story of their disaster, and then this was the substance of the relation of the oldest of the four, who had rallied sooner than his mates. Their ship was the barque that Mr. Matthews was now in charge of. They had sailed from Hull two months previously, and whilst wind-bound in the Downs two of the men sneaked ashore in a galley-punt and ran away, and the vessel put to sea short-handed to that extent. Three days after sailing the captain was found dead in his bed. This was the first of a series of misfortunes. Before a fortnight had passed the chief mate was stricken with some kind of fever, from which he never recovered, though he continued to navigate the ship down to within twelve hours of his death. This left eight men. The carpenter acting as second mate (an uncertificated man) took charge. In the fifth week, whilst reefing topsails, a man fell from aloft, struck his head and shortly afterwards expired. Another man not long after was disabled by the slipping of the forecastle capstan, and in less than a week his mates gave him the sailor's last toss over the side. This left five men to carry on the ship's work. The number would certainly have sufficed, but three days before the *Guide* sighted the barque the second mate, who was hanging over the stern to get a view of the rudder, fell. The vessel was then going at some six or seven miles an hour, and before the boat could be lowered the man was a long distance astern. Banks of vapour similar to those into which the *Guide* had steamed had been moving before the breeze over the face of the waters throughout the day, and therefore it was an act of singular indiscretion on the part

of the crew to quit the barque. They were chiefly urged, however, by the consideration that the second mate was the only man in the ship who could take a sight or work out the dead reckoning, and that without him their plight would be desperate indeed. They left a young ordinary seaman behind to bring the barque to the wind, and rowed away in the direction where the second mate was swimming; but soon after they had gone a fog-bank rolled down on the vessel, the wind at the same moment freshened a trifle, the weather thickened about them, and being unable to see anything of the *Ocean Star* during the afternoon they lost her for good in the night.

Such was the poor fellow's story, and it explained much of the mystery of the abandoned barque. The rest could only be conjectured; but when the survivors of the original crew came to talk the matter over with Mr. Matthews and his men they agreed among them that the ordinary seaman who had been left behind was in the vessel when the *Guide* sighted her; that he had put the fowl on to cook for his dinner; that on the steamer heaving in view he heaped coals on to the galley fire with the idea, perhaps, of inviting assistance by such signal as smoke would make; that he had lighted the forecastle lamp and left it burning; and that the ill-luck of the ship pursuing him he must have fallen overboard, probably whilst springing on to the rail to watch the steamer. If this was not so, there is no other solution of the mystery of the *Ocean Star*, and the trimmer was right.*

* Reprinted from *Longman's Magazine.*

THE EXTRAORDINARY ADVENTURE OF A CHIEF MATE.

In the newspapers of 1876, appeared the following extracts from the log of a merchantman:—

"Volcanic Island in the North Atlantic.—The ship *Hercules* of Liverpool, lately arrived in the Mersey, reports as follows: March 23, in two degrees, twelve minutes, north latitude, thirty-three degrees, twenty-seven minutes, west longitude, a shock of earthquake was felt, and shortly afterwards, a mass of land was hove up at a distance of about two miles from the ship. Michael Balfour, the chief officer, fell overboard. A buoy was thrown to him, the ship brought to the wind, and a boat lowered within fifteen minutes of the occurrence. But though the men sought the chief mate for some time, nothing could be seen of him, and it is supposed that he sank shortly after falling into the sea. Masters of vessels are recommended to keep a sharp look-out in approaching the situation of the new island as given above. No doubt, it will be sighted by other ships, and duly reported."

I am Michael Balfour; I it was who fell overboard; and it is needless for me to say here that I was *not* drowned. The volcanic island was only reported by one other ship, and the reason why will be read at large in

this account of my strange adventure, and merciful deliverance.

It was the evening of the 23rd of March, 1876. Our passage to the Equator from Sydney had been good, but, for three days, we had been bothered with light head winds and calms, and since four o'clock this day, the ocean had stretched in oil-smooth undulations to its margin, with never a sigh of air to crispen its marvellous serenity into shadow. The courses were hauled up, the staysails down, the mizzen brailed up; the canvas delicately beat the masts to the soft swing of the tall spars, and sent a small rippling thunder through the still air, like a roll of drums heard at a distance. The heat was great; I had never remembered a more biting sun. The pitch in the seams was soft as putty, the atmosphere was full of the smell of blistered paint, and it was like putting your hand on a red-hot stove to touch the binnacle hood, or grasp for an instant an iron belaying pin.

A sort of loathing comes into a man with a calm like this. "The very deep did rot," says the poet, and you understood his fancy when you marked the blind heave of the swell to the sun standing in the midst of a sky of brass, with his wake under him sinking in a sinuous dazzle, as though it was his fiery glance piercing to the green depths a thousand fathoms deep. It was hot enough to slacken the nerves, and give the imagination a longer scope than sanity would have it ride by. That was why, perhaps, I found something awful and forbidding in the sunset, though at another time it might scarcely have detained my gaze a minute. But it is true, nevertheless, that others besides me gaped at the wonderful gushings of hot purple—arrested whirlpools of crimson haze, they looked—in the heart

of which the orb sat rayless, flooding the sea with blood under him, so magnificently fell was the hue, and flushing the sky with twenty dyes of gold and orange, till, in the far east, the radiance fainted into the delicacy of pale amber.

"Yon's a sunset," said Captain Matthews, a North of England man, to me, "to make a fellow think of the Last Day."

"I'm looking at it, sir," said I, "as though I had never seen a sunset before. That's the oddest part of it to my mind. There's fire enough there to eat a gale up. How should a cat's-paw crawl then?" And I softly whistled, whilst he wetted his finger and held it up—but to no purpose; the draught was all between the rails, and they blew forward and aft with every swing of the sails.

When the dusk came along, the silence upon the sea was something to put all sorts of moods into a man. The sky was a hovering velvet stretch of stars, with a young moon lying curled among them, and winkings of delicate violet sheet-lightning down in the south-west, as though some gigantic-tinted lantern, passing, flung its light upon the dark blue obscure there. The captain went below, after a long, impatient look round, and I overhung the rail, peering into the water alongside, or sending my gaze into the frightful distance, where the low-lying stars hung. With every soft dip of the ship's side to the slant of the dark folds, there shot forth puffs of cloudy phosphor, intermixed with a sparkling of sharper fires now and again, blue, yellow, and green, like worms of flame striking out of their cocoons of misty radiance. The noise of the canvas on high resembled the stirring of pinions, and the cheep of a block, the grind of a parrel, helped the illusion, as

though the sounds were the voices of huge birds restlessly beating their pinions aloft.

Presently, the man at the wheel startled me with an observation. I went to him, and he pointed upwards, with a long shadowy arm. I looked, and saw a corposant, as it is called at sea—a St. Elmo's fire—burning at the end of the crossjack yard. The yard lay square, and the polished sea beneath gave back the reflection so clearly that the mystic fire lay like a huge glow-worm on the black mirror.

"There should be wind not far off," said the helmsman, in a subdued voice, for few sailors can see one of these lights without a stirring of his superstitious instincts; and this particular exhalation hung close to us.

"I hope so," said I; "though I don't know where it's to come from."

As I spoke, the light vanished. I ran my eye over the yards, expecting its re-appearance, but it returned no more, and the sails rose pale and phantom-like to the stars. I was in an odd humour, and this was an apparition not to brighten one up. Of course, one knows all about these marine corpse-candles, and can explain their nature; but, nevertheless, the sudden kindling of them upon the darkness of the night, in the dead hush of the calm, or amidst the fury of the shrieking hurricane, produces feelings which there is nothing in science to resolve. I could have laughed to find myself sending a half-awed look aloft, as if I expected to see some visionary hand at work upon another one of these graveyard illuminations, with a stealing out of some large, sad face to the melancholy glow; but I returned to the side very pensive for all that, and there stood watching the fiery outline of a shark subtly sneaking close to the surface (insomuch that the wake of its fin

slipped away in little coils of green flame), towards the ship's bows.

Half an hour later, the dark curl of a light air of wind shattered the starlight in the sea, and our canvas fell asleep. I called to the watch to trim sail, and in a few moments the decks were busy with the figures of men pulling and hauling and surging out at the ropes, in sulky, slumberous growlings. The captain arrived.

"Little worth having in this, I fear," said he. "But make the most of it—make the most of it. Get the foretopmast stunsail run up. If she creeps but a league, it is a league to the good."

The sail was sleepily set. Humbugging about with stunsails to the cat's-paws little pleased the men, especially at night. For three days they had been box-hauling the yards about to no purpose, and it was sickening work running stunsail-booms out to airs that died in their struggles to reach us. However, here was a draught at last, and the old gurgling and moaning sounds of the breathless, sluggish swell washing heavily like liquid lead to the sides, were replaced by the tinkling noises of waters parting at the bows with a pretty little seething of expiring foam, and the hiss of exploding froth-bells. At eleven o'clock, the light breeze was still holding, and the ship was floating softly through the dusk, the paring of moon swaying like a silver sickle over the port mizzen topsail yardarm, everything quiet along the decks, no light save the sheen from the lamps in the binnacle, and nothing stirring but the figure of a man on the forecastle pacing athwart-ships, and blotting out at every step a handful of the stars which lay like dust on the blackness, under the yawn of the forecourse. On a sudden, a steamer's lights showed on the starboard bow—a green beam, and a yellow one above, with the

water on fire beneath them, and sparks floating away upon her coil of smoke, that made you think of the spangles of a falling rocket. She went past swiftly, at no great distance from us; there was not a moan in the hot breeze to disturb the wonderful ocean stillness, and you almost thought you caught the beating of the iron heart in her, and the curious monotonous songs which engines sing as they work. She swept past like a phantom, running a line of illuminated windows along, which resembled a row of street-lamps out in the darkness, and as she came on to our quarter, she struck seven bells—half-past eleven—the rich, metallic notes of which I clearly heard; and with the trembling of the last stroke upon the ear, her outline melted.

At that instant a peculiar thrill ran through the ship. It may be likened to the trembling in a floor when a heavy waggon passes in the street outside. It was over in a breath, but I could have sworn that it was not my fancy. I walked aft to the wheel and said to the man, "Did you notice anything just now?"

"Seemed to me as if the vessel trembled like," he replied.

As he spoke the ship shook again, this time strongly; it was something more than a shudder, the sensation was for all the world as though she had scraped over a shoal of rock or shingle. There was a little clatter below, a noise of broken glass. The watch who had been dozing on deck sprang to their feet, and their ejaculations of surprise and fear rolled in a growl among them. The captain ran out of the companion-way in his shirt and trousers.

"What was that, Mr. Balfour?" he bawled.

"Either the shock of an earthquake," said I, "or a whale sliding along our keel.'

"Get a cast of the lead! get a cast of the lead!" he shouted.

This was done, to the full scope of the handline, without bottom, of course. By this time the watch below had tumbled up and all hands were now on deck, staring aloft or over the side, sniffing, spitting, muttering, and wondering what had happened.

"There's that bloomin' compreesant come again!" exclaimed a hoarse voice; and, sure enough, a light similar to the one that had hung at the crossjack yardarm now floated upon the end of the upper main-topsail yard.

"The devil's abroad to-night!" exclaimed the captain. "There's sulphur enough about;" and he fell a-snuffling.

What followed might have made an infidel suppose so; for scarce were the words out of his mouth when there happened an astonishing blast of noise, as loud and violent as that of forty or fifty cannons fired off at once: and out of the black sea no further than a mile broad on the starboard beam rose a pillar of fire, crimson as the light of the setting sun and as dazzling too: it lived whilst you might have counted twenty, but in that time it lighted up the sea for leagues and leagues, put out the stars and made the sky resemble a canopy of yellow satin; we on the ship saw one another's faces as if by daylight—the shrouds and masts and our own figures cast jet-black shadows on the deck—the whole ship flashed out to that amazing radiance like a fabric sun-touched. The column of fire then flattened and disappeared, and the night rolled down upon our blinded eyes as black as thunder.

There was no noise: no hissing as of boiling water. If the furious report that preceded the leap of the fire had rendered its coming terrible, its extinction was made

not less awful by the tomb-like stillness that attended it. I sprang on to the rail believing I could perceive a dark mass—like a deeper dye upon the blackness that way—upon the water, and, to steady myself, caught hold of the mizzen loyal backstay, swinging out to my arm's length and peering with all my might. My excitement was great, and the consternation that possessed the ship's crew was upon me. As I leaned, the vessel heeled violently to a large swell caused by the volcanic disturbances. The roll was extraordinarily severe, heaving the vessel down to her covering-board, and the great hill of water running silent and in darkness through the sea, so that it could neither be viewed nor heard, made the sickening lurch a dreadful surprise and wonder.

It was in that moment that I fell overboard. I suppose my grip of the backstay relaxed when the ship lay down; but, let the thing have happened how it would, in a breath I was under water. It is said that the swiftness of thought is best shown by dreams. This may be so; yet I cannot believe that thought was ever swifter in a dream than it was in me ere I came to the surface, for in those few seconds I gathered exactly what had befallen me, wondered whether my fall had been seen, whether I should be saved, realized my hopeless condition if I had not been observed, and, above all, was thinking steadfastly and with horror of the shark I had not long ago watched stemming in fire past the ship. I was a very indifferent swimmer, and what little power I had in that way was like to be paralyzed by thoughts of the shark. I rose and fetched a breath, shook the water out of my eyes, and looked for the ship. She had been sliding along at the rate of about four knots an hour; but had she

been sailing at ten she could not seem to have gone further from me during the brief while I was submerged. From the edge of the water, where my eyes were, she appeared a towering pale shadow about a mile off. I endeavoured to scream out; but whether the cold of the plunge had bereft me of my voice, or that I had swallowed water enough to stop my pipes, I found I could utter nothing louder than a small groan. I made several strokes with my arms, and suddenly spied a lifebuoy floating almost twenty yards ahead of me. I made for it in a transport of joy, for the sight of it was all the assurance I could ask that they knew on the ship that I had tumbled overboard, and, coming to the buoy, I seized and threw it over my head, and then got it under my arms and so floated.

The breeze—such as it was—was on the ship's quarter, and she would need to describe a considerable arc before she rounded to. I could hear very faintly the voices on board, the flinging down of coils of rope, the dim echoes of hurry and commotion. I again sought to exert my lungs, but could deliver no louder note than a moan. The agony of mind I was under lest a shark should seize me I cannot express, and my strained eyeballs would come from the tall shadow of the ship to the sea about me in a wild searching of the liquid ebony of it for the sparkling configuration of the most abhorred of all fish. I could have sworn that hours elapsed before they lowered a boat from the ship that seemed to grow fainter and fainter every time I looked at her, so swallowing is the character of ocean darkness, and so subtle apparently, so fleet, in fact, the settling away of a fabric under canvas from an object stationary on the water. I could distinctly hear the rattle of the oars in the rowlocks and the splash of

the dipped blades, but could not discern the boat. It was speedily evident, however, that they were pulling wide of me. My ear could not mistake. Again I tried to shout, but to no purpose. Manifestly no one had thought of taking my bearings when I fell, and I, who lay south, was being sought for south-west.

Time passed; the boat never approached me within a quarter of a mile. They must instantly have heard me, could I have hallo'd; but my throat refused its office. I reckoned that they continued to row here and there for about half an hour, during which they were several times hailed by the captain, as I supposed; the sound of the oars then died. A little later I heard the very faint noises made by their hoisting the boat and hauling in upon the braces, and then there was nothing for me to do but to watch, with dying eyes, the shadow of the ship till it faded, and the stars shone where she had been.

The sky shed very little light, and there was no foam to cast an illumination of its own. However, by this time, as you will suppose, I was used to my situation, that is to say, the horror and novelty of my condition had abated and settled into a miserable feeling of despair, so that I was like a dying man who had passed days in an open boat, and who languidly directs his eyes over the gunwale at the sea, with the hopelessness that is bred by familiarity with his dreadful posture. It was some time after the ship had melted into the airy dusk that I seemed to notice, for the first time since I had been in the lifebuoy, the lump of blackness at which I had been straining my eyes when the vessel heeled and I fell. It had the elusiveness of a light at sea, that is best seen (at a distance) by gazing a little on one side of it. It lay a black mass, and

whether it was a vast huddle of weeds, or a great whale killed by the earthquake, or solid land uphove by the volcanic rupture was not conjecturable. It hung still and not very tall, for I could not see that it put out any stars, and was about a mile distant. Whatever it might prove, I could not be worse off near or on or amidst it than I was here; so, setting my face towards it, I began to strike out with my legs and arms.

The water was so fiery, it chipped in flashes to every blow of my hands. I swam in the utmost terror, never knowing but that the next moment I should be feeling the teeth of a shark upon my legs, for the sparkling of the sea to my kicks and motions was signal enough for such a beast if it was a league distant; but I may as well say here that there is no doubt the shock of earthquake and the flame effectually cleared the sea in its neighbourhood of every kind of fish that floated in it, though the hope of such a thing could yield me but very little comfort whilst I swam.

I continued to make good progress, and presently approaching the block of blackness, for so it looked, perceived that it was certainly land—a solid rock, in short—the head of some mountainous submarine formation lifted ten or twelve feet above the sea. I could now discern a faintness of vapour circling up from it and showing like steam against the stars. Its front stretched a length of a few hundred feet; how far it went behind I could not tell. A small sound of creaming waters came from it, produced by the light swell washing its shelter side. It lay all in a line of greyish darkness, even when I was quite close, and I could see nothing but the shapeless body of it. On a sudden my feet struck ground, and I waded thirty paces along a shelf that was under water, till my paces lifted to the

dry beach. But by this time I was fearfully exhausted —I could scarcely breathe. My legs and arms were numbed to the weight of lead. The atmosphere was warm, but not unbearably so—not hotter than it had been at noon in the ship. Steam crawled up from every pore, like the drainings of smoke from damp straw, but it did not add to the distress of my breathing. I made shift to stagger onwards till I had gone about fifty feet from the wash of the sea; nature then broke down; my knees gave way, I stumbled and fell—whether in a swoon, or whether in a death-like slumber, I cannot say; all I can tell is that when I awoke, or recovered my senses, the sun stood fifteen degrees above the horizon, and I opened my eyes upon a hot and dazzling sky.

I sat up in the utmost amazement. My mind, for some time, was all abroad, and I could recollect nothing. Memory then entered me with a bound, and I staggered to my feet with a cry. The first thing I took notice of was that my clothes were nearly dry, which was not very reconcilable with the steam that was still issuing from the island, though it was as I say. My bones ached cruelly, but I was not sensible of any particular languor. The brilliance was so blinding that I had to enploy my eyes very warily in order to see; and it was not until I had kept opening and shutting them and shading them with my hands for some minutes that they acquired their old power. The island on which I stood had unquestionably been hove up in the night by the earthquake. I cannot figure it better than by asking you to imagine a gigantic mass of pumice-stone somewhat flat on top and shelving on all sides very gently to the water, lying afloat but steady on the sea. It was of the hue of pumice and as clean as an eggshell without a grain of calcined dust or any appearance of scoriæ

that I could anywhere observe. It was riddled with holes, some wide and deep—a very honeycomb, and that I did not break my neck or a limb in my staggering walk from the beach in the darkness, I must ever account the most miraculous part of my adventure.

But what (when I had my whole wits) riveted my attention, and held me staring open-mouthed as though in good truth the apparition of the devil had arisen before me, was the body of a ship leaning on its bilge, at not more than a gun-shot from where I stood, looking towards the interior. When my eyes first went to the thing I could not believe them. I imagined it some trick of the volcanic explosion that had fashioned a portion of the land or rock (as it may be called) into the likeness of a ship; but on gazing steadfastly I saw that it was indeed a vessel, rendered extraordinarily beautiful and wonderful, by being densely covered with shells, of a hundred different kinds, by which her bulk was enlarged though her shape was preserved. Bright fountains of water were gushing from fifty places in her; all these waterfalls shone like rainbows and showed surprisingly soft and lovely against the velvet-green of the moss and the grey and kaleidoscopic tints of the shells upon her. Lost in amazement I made my way towards her, and stood viewing her at a short distance. She had three lower masts standing—one right in the bows, and the mizzen raking very much aft. All three masts were supported by shrouds, and that was all the rigging the sea had left. She looked to be made of shells and moss: her shrouds and masts were encrusted as thickly as her hull. She was a mere tub of a ship in shape, being scarce twice as long as she was broad, with great fat buttocks, a very tall stern narrowing a-top, and low bows with a prodigious curve to the stem-

head. I am not well versed in the shipping of olden times, but I would have willingly staked all I was worth in the world that the fabric before me belonged to a period not much later than the days of Columbus, and that she had been sunk at least three centuries below the sea; and it was also perfectly clear to me that she had risen in the daylight, out of her green and oozy sepulchre, with the upheaval of the bed on which she lay to the convulsion that had produced this island.

But my situation was not one to suffer me to stand long, idly wondering and staring. The moment I brought my eyes away from the ship to the mighty desolation of the blue and gleaming ocean, a horror broke upon me, my heart turned into lead, and in the anguish of my spirits I involuntarily lifted my clenched hands to God. What was to become of me? I had no boat, no means of making anything to bear me—nothing but the life-buoy that was no better than a trap for sharks to tear me to pieces in. I was thirsty, but there was no fresh water on this steaming speck of rock, and I tell you, the knowing that there was none, and that unless rain fell I must die of thirst, had like to have driven me mad. Where the ship was and beyond it, the island rose somewhat in the form of a gentle undulation. I walked that way and there obtained a view of the whole island, which was very nearly circular, like the head of a hill, somewhat after the shape of a saucepan lid. It resembled a great mass of sponge to the sight, and there was no break upon its surface save the encrusted ship, which did, indeed, form a very conspicuous object. Happening to look downwards, I spied a large dead fish, of the size of a cod of sixteen or eighteen pounds, lying a-dry in a hole. I put my arm down and dragged it out, and, hoping by appeasing my hunger to help my thirst some-

what, I opened my knife and cut out a little raw steak, and ate it. The moisture in the flesh refreshed me, and, that the sun might not spoil the carcase, I carried it to the shadow made by the ship and put it under one of the waterfalls that the play might keep it sweet. There was plenty more dead fish in the numerous holes, and I picked out two and put them in the shade; but I knew that the great heat must soon taint them and rot the rest, whence would come a stench that might make the island poisonous to me.

I sat down under the bends of the ship for the shadow it threw and gazed at the sea. Perhaps I ought to have felt grateful for the miraculous creation of this spot of land, when, but for it, I must have miserably perished in the life-buoy, dying a most dreadful, slow, tormenting death, if some shark had not quickly despatched me; but the solitude was so frightful, my doom seemed so assured, I was threatened with such dire sufferings ere my end came that, in the madness and despair of my heart, I could have cursed the intervention of this rock, which promised nothing but the prolongation of my misery. There was but one live spark amid the ashes of my hopes—namely, that the island lay in the highway of ships, and that it was impossible a vessel could sight so unusual an object without deviating from her course to examine it. That was all the hope I had; but God knows there was nothing in it to keep me alive, when I set off against it the consideration that there was no water on the island, no food; that a ship would have to sail close to remark so flat and little a point as this rock; and that days, ay, and weeks, might elapse before the rim of yonder boundless surface, stretching in airy leagues of deep blue to the azure sky at the horizon, should be broken by the star-like shining of a sail.

Happily, the wondrous encrusted bulk was at hand to draw my thoughts away from my hideous condition, for I verily believe, had my eye found nothing to rest upon but the honeycombed pumice, my brain would have given way. I stood up and took a long view of the petrified shell-covered structure, feeling a sort of awe in me whilst I looked, for it was a kind of illustration of the saying of the sea giving up its dead, and the thing stirred me almost as though it had been a corpse that had risen to the sun, after having been a secret of the deep for three hundred years.

It occurred to me that if I could board her she might furnish me with a shelter from the dew of the night. She had channels with long plates, all looking as if they were formed of shells; and stepping round to the side towards which she leaned, I found the fore channel plates to be within reach of my hands. The shells were slippery and cutting; but I was a sailor, and there would have been nothing in a harder climb than this to daunt me. So, after a bit of a struggle, I succeeded in hauling myself into the chains, and thence easily dragged myself over the rail on to the deck.

The sight between the bulwarks was far more lovely and surprising than the spectacle presented by the ship's sides. For the decks seemed not only formed of shells of a hundred different hues: there was a great abundance of branching corals, white as milk, and marine plants of kinds for which I could not find names, of several brilliant colours, so that what with the delicate velvet of the moss, the dark shades of seaweed of figurations as dainty as those of ferns, and the different sorts of shells, big and little, all lying as solid as if they had been set in concrete, the appearance the ship submitted was something incredibly fantastic and admirable.

Whether the hatches were on or not I could not tell, so thickly coated were the decks; but whether or not, the deposits and marine growths rendered the surface as impenetrable as iron, and I believe it would have kept a small army of labourers plying their pickaxes for a whole week to have made openings into the hold through that shelly coating of mail.

My eye was taken by a peculiar sort of protuberance at the foot of the mainmast; it stood as high as I did and had something of the shape of a man, and, indeed, after staring at it for some time, I perceived that it had been a man: that is to say, it was a human skeleton, filled up to the bulk of a living being by the shells and barnacles which covered it. Ashore, it might have passed for some odd imitation in shells of the human figure; but, viewing it as I did, in the midst of that great ocean, amidst the frightful solitude of the great dome of heaven, in a ship that was like the handiwork of the sea-gods at the bottom of the deep—I say, looking at it as I did, and knowing the thing had had life in centuries past and had risen thus wildly garnished out of the unfathomable secret heart of the ocean, it awed me to an extent I cannot express, and I gazed as though fascinated. In all probability, this was a man who, when the ship foundered, had been securely lashed to the mast, for safety or for punishment.

I turned away at last, with a shudder, and walked aft. The wreck was unquestionably some Spanish or Portuguese carrack or galleon, as old as I have stated, for you saw her shape when you stood on her deck, and her castellated stern rising into a tower from her poop and poop-royal, as it was called, proved her age as convincingly as if the date of her launch had been scored upon her. What was in her hold? Thousands of

pounds worth of precious ore in gold and silver bars and ingots for all I knew; but had she been flush to her upper decks with doubloons and ducats, I would have exchanged them all for the sight of a ship, or for a rill of fresh water. I searched the horizon with feverish eyes; there was nothing in sight. The afternoon was advancing; the sun was burning unbearably midway down the western sky, and my thirst tormented me. I dropped over the side and cut another steak of fish; but though the moisture temporarily relieved me, the salt of the water flowing upon it dried into my throat and increased my sufferings. There was a light air blowing, and the sea trembled to it into a deeper hue of blue, and met in a glorious stream of twinkling rubies under the setting sun. I counted half a score of wet black fins round about the island, and understood that the sharks had recovered from their scare, and had returned to see if the earthquake had cast up anything to eat.

When the sun sank, the night came along in a stride; the curl of the moon looked wanly down upon me, and the sky flashed with starshine, so rich and magnificent was the glow of the nearer luminaries. I re-entered the ship and stepped to the cabin front, over which extended a "break" or pent-house, under which I might find some shelter from the dew that was already falling like rain, and squatted down, Lascar fashion, with my back against the shell-armoured bulkhead. Great Father! never had I known what solitude was till then. There was no sound, save the quiet foaming of waters draining from the wreck, and the purring of the very light swell softly moving upon the beach, and the faint, scarce audible whispering of the dew-laden draught of air stirring in the stony, fossilized shrouds. My throat felt like hot brass; I tried to pray, but could not.

Imagination grew a little delirious, and I would sometimes fancy that the terrible shape at the foot of the mainmast moved as if seeking to free itself and approach me. There was a constant glancing of shooting stars on high, swift sparklings and trailings of luminous dust, and, as on the previous night, here and there upon the horizon a dim violet play of sheet lightning. It was like being at the bottom of the sea, alive there, to be in this black, shelly, weed-smelling ship. Whether my thoughts came to me waking or sleeping I cannot tell; but I know some mad fancies possessed me, and upon the sable canvas of the night, imagination, like a magic lantern, flung a dozen febrile-tinctured pictures, and I particularly recollect conceiving that I was my own soul at the bottom of the ocean in the ship; that in the green twilight of the valley in which I was I saw many forms of dead men standing or lying or sitting, preserving the postures in which they had come floating down into the darkly gleaming profound,—figures of sailors of different centuries clad in the garb of their times, intermixed with old ordnance making coarse and rusty streaks upon the sand, the glitter of minted money, the gleam of jewels, and fish brightly apparelled and of shapes unknown to man floating round about like fragments of rainbow. My dreams always wound up with imaginations of babbling drinks, and then I'd wake with the froth upon my lips. However, I got some ease by leaving my handkerchief to soak in the dew and then sucking it.

Several times during the night I had got on to the upper poop—the deck above the poop anciently termed the poop-royal—and looked around me. But there was nothing to see, not a shadow to catch the eye. The breeze freshened somewhat about midnight, and the air was made pleasant by the musical noises of running

waters. I fell asleep an hour before dawn, and when I awoke, the early ashen line was brightening in the east. The birth of the day is rapid in those parallels, and the light of the morning was soon all over sea and sky. I turned to search the ocean, and the first thing I saw was a brig not above half a mile from the island. She had studding sails set and was going north, creeping along before the breeze. The instant I saw her I rushed on to the poop, where my figure would be best seen, and fell to flourishing my handkerchief like a maniac. I sought to shout, but my voice was even weaker than it had been after I fell overboard. I have no power to describe my feelings whilst I waited to see what the brig would do. I cursed myself for not having kept a look-out, so that I might have had plenty of time to signal to her as she approached. If she abandoned me I knew I must perish, as every instant assured me that I had neither mental nor physical power to undergo another day and night without drink and without hope upon the island.

On a sudden she hauled up the lee clew of her mainsail, boom-ended her studding sails, and put her helm over. I knew what this signified, and, clasping my hands, I looked up to God.

Presently a boat was lowered and pulled towards the island. I dropped over the side, tumbling down upon my nose in my weakness, and made with trembling legs to the beach, standing in my eagerness in the very curl of the wash there. There were three men in the boat and they eyed me as they rowed over their shoulders as if I had been a spectre.

"Who are you, mate, and what country is this?" exclaimed the man who pulled stroke, standing up to stretch his hand to me.

I pointed to my throat, and gasped, "Water!" I could barely articulate.

Nothing in this wide world moves sailors like a cry to them for water. In an instant the three men had dragged me into the boat, and were straining like horses at their oars, as they sent the boat flashing through the rippling water. We dashed alongside.

"He's dying of thirst!" was the cry.

I was bundled on deck, the captain ran below, and returned with a small draught of wine and water.

"Start with that," said he. "You'll be fitter for a longer pull later on."

The drink gave me back my voice; yet for a while I could scarce speak, for the tears that swelled my heart.

"Are there any more of ye?" said the captain.

I answered, "No."

"But what land's this?" he inquired.

"An island uphove by an earthquake," said I.

"Great thunder!" he cried. "And what's that arrangement in shells and weeds a-top of it?"

"A vessel that's probably been three hundred years at the bottom," I answered.

"The quake rose it, hey?"

"Just as it is," said I.

"Well, boil me," cried the worthy fellow, "if it don't seem too good to be true. Mr. Fletcher, trim sail, sir. Best shove along—shove along. Come, sir, step below with me for a rest and a bite, and give me your tale."

A warily eaten meal with another sup of wine and water made me a new man. We sat below a long while, I telling my story, he making notes and talking of the credit he would get for bringing home a report of a new country, when suddenly the mate put his head into the skylight.

"Captain!"

"Hillo!"

"The island's gone, sir."

"What d'ye mean? that we've sunk it?"

"No, by the Lord; but that it's sunk itself."

We ran on deck, and where the island should have been was all clear sea.

The captain stared at the water, with his mouth wide open.

"Nothing to report after all!" he cried.

"I saw it founder!" exclaimed the mate. "I had my eye on it when it sank. I've seen some foundering in my day; but this beats all my going a-fishing!"

"Well," said the captain to me, "we didn't come too soon, sir."

I hid my face in my hands.

The *Susan Gray* was the name of the brig that rescued me. The *Hercules* saw the first of the island, and the *Susan Gray* the last of it. Hence, as I said at the start, it was reported by two vessels only.

THIRST! AN OCEAN INCIDENT.

A PASSENGER'S STORY.

It was the twentieth day of the calm—of a calm so breathless, so hushed, so death-like, that the like of it is unimaginable by the mind to whom the fancy of the ocean comes as a vision of eternal restlessness. Day after day, for twenty days, had the vast plain of the deep spread steeping into the hot blue atmosphere of the horizon, staring up at the brassy heavens like a great eye, without the faintest stir of cat's-paw to tarnish it with a shadow, and without further life in it than a slow, long, sickly swell like the languishing heavings of a dying breast, upon which our brig rolled with horrible regularity, swaying with the punctuality of the pendulum-swing to and fro, to and fro, a dreary sweep of the white buttons of her trucks athwart the central pouring glory of the noontide sky, or across the hovering silver sheet of stars which whitened the indigo heavens from rim to rim when the last rusty tinge of sunset had melted out into the western gloom.

We were bound to Kingston, Jamaica. 'Twas many years ago, when brigs of the sort I was aboard of were regular West Indian traders from the Thames, carrying passengers and cargo with packet-like regularity; only that the passage that was sometimes made in five or six

weeks very often ran into three and even into four months. The *Pelican* was the name of the ship I was in; she was as proper a little brig as ever sight could desire to rest on; coppered to the bends with new sheathing that flung a sort of sunset into the water under her, when she lay at rest with light enough above to put a sheen into the metal; the bows of a clipper rising from knife-like sharpness at the forefoot into graceful breadth at the catheads, and the lines coming along like the sheer of a swan to the elliptical stern, with the right sort of moulded quarters for slipping through the two seas, which her speed in a breeze promised to make fixtures abaft, one on either side. She was rigged as few vessels of her kind nowadays are, her topgallant masts tapering into long, skysail poles, on which they would set "moon-sails," as they were called, shreds of shining white cloth, mere parings of the moon they looked, or rather as though they had been formed of the wings of the flying-fish, the daintiest imaginable spaces crowning each white spire, and making one think of a bit of cloud having been torn away by the reel of the mast and shaping itself upon that tiny yard, high up in the sky, as one followed the swelling fabric from the wide spread of courses and topsails on to the tender narrowing of the topgallant sail, royal and skysail.

I was the only passenger on board, though there was cabin accommodation for six or eight people. Our run after leaving the English Channel had been exceedingly good for some days. The captain was in high spirits; 'twas his first command of the brig, and he would talk to her as if she were his sweetheart, as she flashed through it in long floating plunges, flinging rainbows to the windward sun and snowstorms to leeward, with a

wake in tow of her that swung seething with the lustre of white satin over the blue ridges till the fan-shaped end of it vanished in the far-off windy haze. Then on a sudden, some time before our stem had approached the polar verge of the trade-wind, the breeze shifted and came on to blow dead ahead, raising a lump of sea that struck the weather bow in shocks which thrilled through the very heart of the little ocean beauty. With yards braced sharp up, reefs in the topsails, the jib and stay-sail forward dark to midway their height with the saturation of the brine, we reeled along, first on one tack then on another, staggering drunkenly upon the rushing surge, with masts aslope and shrieking rigging, and the yeasty spume alongside boiling up, with the leeward "scends" to the level of the topgallant rail. This was very well for a day or two; but before long it grew sickening, and one loathed the sound of the wind as though it were a drunken sailor's voice howling blasphemies. The captain's face grew longer every day. At noon there were sights to be had punctually, but very little encouragement to be got out of them.

"The Lord preserve us!" the old fellow would cry, "only two miles of westing in all them twenty-four hours! Why, at this rate, 'twould be better to up keeleg, head for a Spanish port—to Cadiz, where all the handsome girls be, and change our dollars into Madeirey and grapes, and so rest joyful till this here blowing weather changes its mind. Why, smite my eyes! if headway is to be starnway, it's about time for a man to coil down."

Well, sometimes we'd get a little slant, the sea moderating with it, which enabled us to look up to our course within two or three points; but for a whole six weeks, incredible as it may seem, were we so bothered,

confounded, repelled by head winds, so defeated in every little nimble effort of seamanship that our lively hearty of a skipper adventured, by the spite of the breeze that would again and again head us after we had gone about, as though it meant to wear the souls out of the crew by keeping them pulling and hauling at the braces day and night, that at the expiration of seven weeks we might still say that even should the wind shift and come on to blow fair for us, and keep us humming steadfastly throughout the rest of the passage, Jamaica still lay a good month and a half distant.

Time wore on, and we continued shoving along as best we could, keeping our hopes polished by thoughts of the north-east trades. But the only breeze that blew from that quarter lasted but two days. For my part I don't believe it was the trade wind at all, not a breath from the fanning of a pinion of it. You would look aloft for the familiar trade cloud and see nothing but a piebald sky, mottled like the soap the washerwomen use, with suds enough below in the arch of every billow to make one appreciate the likeness, with a black curl of scud, perhaps, here and there, blowing across it, and a higher range of vapour trending westward, the wrong way, as one would suppose.

Now, about this time the cook made a discovery. We were short of fresh water. God knows how the blunder had happened or who was responsible for it; but the casks in the hold told the truth, and when the supply came to be overhauled and gauged, it was discovered that if we were not to briefly perish of thirst all hands must be put forthwith upon the stingiest conceivable allowance. At this distance of time I could not swear to what it was, though I have some recollection of about a pannikin full a day for all purposes of wash-

ing, cooking, and drinking, with a sullen hint that if our passage should be further delayed it might come to a thimbleful, with a thanksgiving to God even for *that* blessing. Of course we cast thirsty eyes up aloft in search of wet weather; but though it occasionally rained on the horizon, the devil's luck was on the ship; not a drop fell to darken our white decks with a blot as big as a sixpence. I put my finger into the dew on the rail at night, but the taste was salt—*salt* with a dash of oil in it from the paint; for when we got into that dead and roasting calm the brig fell to blistering and scaling all over like a burnt body, with such a stink of hot paint in the air that it turned the very thirst in one into sickness.

I was making the voyage merely to have a look at Jamaica; had embarked without consulting people who might have given me a useful hint or two; and, like a fool, had started very ill-provided with private stores. I had laid in a small stock of hams, conserves, a few pounds' worth of useless delicacies, with a quarter of a hencoop full of fowls, a dozen or so of brandy, and the like. What would I have given when that calm came to have converted the whole into beer? The ship's stock of drink, outside water, consisted of rum, of which the captain and mates drank freely, and which was served out rather too handsomely, I would sometimes think, to the sailors. But rum out of bond considerably above proof is not a liquor that cools the thirsty palate. The men mixed it with water with the idea of making the draught go further; but there was so little water to put to the spirit that the dose, when it at all approached the proportions of a drink, was as fire; thirst was increased by it, and the men ended in cursing it, one or two of them only laying aft when grog was "piped."

We looked out for ships, hoping to get help in that way; but though we sighted several sail during our stormier progress, the high sea put even mere hailing out of question, and when the dead calm fell, nothing swam into the stagnant circle in whose heart our brig lay like the Ancient Mariner's rotting ship.

That calm made a wild disappointment for us. We had floated into it on the breath of a light breeze with a huddle of white clouds in the quarter, whence the draught came; and there was a prismatic tinge upon their clustering brows that promised to fling some weight into the breeze presently; instead of which the sea came stealing out from them into glass, with the setting sun striking a fierce smoky crimson into the vapour that seemed to make their bellies black as thunder with the reddening of their heads; and when the western light had died out into the indigo of the night the clouds were gone, and there was not a rag of vapour of the size of a man's hand anywhere about, as you saw by the stars, which went down in a sort of showering of silver, as it seemed, to the very edge of the sea that brimmed to the sky, black and gleaming as the surface of an ebony table. Well, of course, one went on living in hope; but I can tell you that at the end of the first week of this deadness there was never an eye that looked over the side at the blue tranquillity, with the blinding dazzle tremorless in its heart under the sun, without coming away from the sight with as scared and wild an expression in it as if it had caught a glimpse of Death's own skeleton patiently floating with his mirthless grin close aboard of us.

In those twenty days we slided—though God knows how! for I never remember so much as the waft of a breath of air throughout the time—fifteen miles to the

southward: as I live to write it! Fifteen miles only. Think of it—in twenty days! Our rigging grew grey with the heat and dryness, the sun burnt so fiercely that if you let your hand lie for the space of a breath upon the black woodwork, or upon such brass ornamentation as the binnacle-hood or the shield atop of the capstan, you raised a blister for yourself that gave you pain for days. So hot was the deck that the brig seemed full of fire, and if ever a man was rash enough to spring through the scuttle with his feet unshod he'd howl out to the burning of his toes as though he had stepped into a kettle of boiling pitch. We had a bit of an awning stretched aft, but it did nothing toward cooling the cabin. In fact it was impossible to exist below. It was not only the roasting atmosphere: the cockroaches blackened the beams; the place was full of rats besides; and then there was that sickening, heart-subduing eternity of rolling with every bulkhead creaking, with every separate piece of cargo in the hold delivering a note of its own, the regular clank, clank of doors jerking upon their hooks along with the drowning sobbings of the swell as it came flushing to the bends. The stuff that the cook flung overboard at noon one day was close alongside at noon the next day. We held a bottle in view for a week. I'd take it for a shark's fin sometimes, guessing *that* from the wet flash it would give; holding it impossible that the same object could linger so long at sea within so narrow a sphere; but it punctually proved the bottle of yesterday, and of the preceding days, until in a sudden fit of sheer disgust and rage at the recurrence of that signal of our miserable stagnation, I let drive at it with my pistol, and at the third shot shivered the glass and down it went.

It was the harder for the men, for their provisions

were of a kind to breed thirst—salt beef sparkling with brine from the tierce and boiled in salt water; dark and clammy pudding as acrid as the skimming of slush from the galley coppers could render it; saline pork, the mere measly hue of which sent the imagination ashore to the can of frothing beer, or better yet, to the crystal of spring-water cold from the leaf-shadowed rocks. The captain did his best to deal with this difficulty by giving the poor fellows fresh messes. There was very little to eat on board, however, that was sweet. Indeed, our own fare aft was as briny as the forecastle victuals, only that it was of better quality, with a boiled or roast fowl to vary it. Our condition grew horribly serious. When the twentieth day came there was scarce fresh water enough in the vessel to hold out for another week, whilst a fly might have waded through every sailor's daily allowance of it. No man had the art of distilling water, and maybe for that reason it was never thought of. It was idle to look around for a sail in so dead a calm. There were very few steamers afloat in those distant times, and the fabrics driven by wheels made for the Cape rather than these waters. And indeed no one then had more idea of sighting a steamship than of beholding the great sea-serpent.

Well, the morning of the twentieth day broke. The sea was the same surface of glass it had been for nigh hand three weeks; but it was noticed by us, with a fluttering of hope in every man's heart, that the sun rose out of several long streaks of rosy cloud, a novelty in him, for it had been his custom to spring like a huge pink ball from behind the water line. Though his light was as tingling as of old, we observed that the radiance lacked its wonted brilliant dazzle. There was something of mistiness in it, and the wake of him came sallowly,

in a narrow band, to the brig's side, sulkily riding the roll of the swell that ran right at him. Shortly after eleven in the forenoon one saw what this meant by the darkening of the blue at the horizon away down in the north-west quarter; and ere eight bells were struck our masts were aslant to a pleasant wind, buzzing blue and hot into every cloth that the sailors could pile upon the vessel.

The captain had scarce brought his sextant away from his eye when a seaman, high aloft on the foretopgallant yard, with his figure showing black to the misty blaze of the sun as he swung from the tie, peering with shaded eyes under the foot of the royal, sent down an eager cry of "Sail on the starboard bow!" and within a quarter of an hour the gleam of her, like the tip of a seabird's pinion, was visible from the deck, steady in the same direction, proving that she was either heading our way or that we were overhauling her. We were, every man of us, mad for the sight of a vessel, and we watched that pearl-like shape as one may say with dying eyes. It was speedily apparent, however, that she was standing towards us; she rose fast, showing in the lenses of the telescope as a fine schooner hauling the wind, lying down to the breeze in a manner to prove that she was light, and growing with such swiftness as was ample warrant of a clipper's heels.

"An American," said the captain to me, "or I am much mistaken."

"Why do you think so?" said I.

"Because of the sheen of her canvas," said he; "there's cotton enough in it for a hundred women's gowns. Pray Almighty Providence she be plentifully stocked with fresh water."

It was not long before we had a sight of her flag

blowing from the foretopmast head, that we might see it clearly; the stripes and stars, as our captain had anticipated! but the stars upside down, converting the beautiful banner into a signal of distress.

"So much the better," cried our skipper, with the selfishness of misery. "She'll be sure to be the more willing to help us if we are able to help her. But what ails her? Sickness, a skulking mutineer or two, or something that a cask of beef may remedy?" he chuckled, following on with a cry to the helmsman, "Nothing off, nothing off!"

She was as fine a schooner as ever breasted the blue surge; of the old Baltimore clipper type, black and long, with a high bronzing of metal, and a noble flight of sea wings rising to the royal at the fore. You saw the white water pulsing at her bows as she came along, shearing through it like a knife through satin, with a hurry of light in her glossy sides that seemed reverberated to the very height of her in the tremulous pulling of her star-spangled bunting. Our captain was in the act, as I gathered from the looks of him and the movement of his lips, to order the brig's way to be arrested by bringing the topsail to the mast, when he was stopped by the schooner suddenly going about, then filling on the starboard tack with her square sails clewing up, her peak drooping, her main tack in the act of being triced aloft, the fore and aft sails slowly descending, and her head falling off so as to close us.

"Well," said the skipper, plunging his hands into his pockets, with the surprised rounding of his eyes lengthening out into their old grey seawardly look, "'twill save us the bother of handling the braces. It is a manœuvre to tell a man that she must be put to it though."

She was so fleet a sailer, you saw, even half denuded as she was of her canvas, whilst we on the other hand had not started a stitch, that she must snug down yet if we were to overhaul her. To my fancy she had the look of a slaver, but with no ebony cargo in her *now*. She was flying light indeed, and travelled under her reduced canvas softly and nimbly as a sleigh over the frisky ripplings of the water.

We picked her up slowly, gradually driving down upon her, with features of her stealing out one by one: the staring white letters of her name, *Marie Richmond*, across her counter, a long-legged fellow in flowing white trousers, a jacket, and a hat like a planter's standing in the main rigging ready to hail us; a negro at the long sweep of tiller frequently turning his chin upon his shoulder to watch us coming, and a crowd of mopping and mowing heads along the rail, dingy-skinned for the most part, a few of them blacks and as picturesque as a pirate's company of rascals, with their many-coloured apparel of red cap, white straw hat, blue shirt, and the like. Our captain got upon the rail ready to speak the stranger. We were likely to come within a biscuit toss of her through her manœuvring; for whilst we had kept our helm amidships throughout, there had been a constant yawing off in her towards us, and you would have almost thought that she meant to lay us aboard. The schooner hailed us first.

"Ho, the brig ahoy!"

"Hillo," sang back the captain.

"We're nigh all hands dead men here for the want of a drink. For God's sake spare us a small supply of fresh water! The last drop was drained out yesterday, as the Lord's my witness. I'll send a boat! I'll send a boat!"

One saw now how wild was the look in the faces clustered along the schooner's rail. As for the fellow who had hailed us, his voice came along with as husky a note as a parrot's, and the mere *hearing* of him was a torment in its way. There was a stir among the men as though they would get their boat over. Our captain instantly responded—

"I'm sorry, I'm sorry. We've scarce got water ourselves to last us another week, and an eggshellful a man at that."

"By God, but you must share it with us!" cried the other.

"No," shouted our captain; "all other stores we have you're welcome to a supply from. We can help ye to beef, to rum, to molasses—but the little drop of water we have we must keep for our life's sake."

A husky voice from the men at the schooner's side yelled out with the tone of a scream in it, "We're dying of thirst. Ye will share what ye have with us for the sake of Jesus!"

'Twas horrible to hear them and to watch them, to feel our helplessness in the face of their anguish; and our own disappointment, too, was bitterly acute, for want of water was the last thought that would have been put into our head by the sight of the inverted stripes and stars.

"Stranger!" cried the fellow in the main rigging, swinging out from the grip of one hand whilst he put the other to his mouth to help carry his voice. "We're dying men aboard this craft, and detarmined for that reason; and, so help us Hell! if you don't make your stock of fresh water yield us a drink all round, we'll board ye and take it for ourselves."

At this threat our sailors—all hands, as you will

believe, were on deck—gathered themselves together as with a sort of instinct, with a quick look round for handspikes, or whatever else might be useful in their fists, one or two of them whipping off their jackets on the spot, whilst I saw another roll his cuffs up and spit into his palms. There were twelve of us, all told, and some sixteen or eighteen of the schooner's company, several of them negroes, as I have said, with a few half-bloods, the rest of them American seamen.

Our captain bawled back, "Sorry it's out of our power to sarve ye. Give us no threats. We're heartily consarned, heartily consarned. But what can't be done *won't* be done."

With that he dismounted from the rail, motioning to the fellow at the wheel to keep the brig off a little. I overhung the bulwarks, looking at the schooner. For my part I never for a moment dreamt that her skipper, as I took the fellow in the rigging to be, was in earnest in threatening to board us. 'Twas a mere idle stroke of despair in him, I thought; and was prepared now to see him sheer off, for our captain, by dropping from the rail, accentuated his resolution not to help him; and, besides, there had been a sorrow and an honesty in his voice that should have satisfied every man aboard the schooner that he had told nothing but sheer truth, cruel as it was, in speaking of our water stock. But, of a sudden, the long-legged man in the rigging, after looking on idly for a moment or two, dropped like a marline spike to the deck and sang out an order, the purport of which I could not gather. The crew left the rail in a rush, some tailing on to the jib halliards, some hauling down the tack of the mainsail. Their movements were full of breathless hurry, but their intentions were now apparent. No sooner had they made and trimmed sail

for the manœuvre that was to follow, than they ran about seeking objects with which to arm themselves, some whipping out iron belaying pins, others flashing out the deadlier sheath-knife, others snatching the stretchers out of the boats; the schooner meanwhile settling down upon our quarter with a gradual sheering up toward us that would bring her rubbing her sides against ours in a few minutes.

Our captain stared bewildered at the craft for a moment, then bawled to the mate: "Mr. Moody, we are without small arms. Let the men collect whatever they can fight best with. We must prevent those chaps from boarding, or we're dead men. Watch where she means to throw her people and gather the hands about the place ready to resist them." So saying he bundled in red-hot haste below, and almost instantly reappeared bearing in his hand a great blunderbuss with a muzzle resembling the mouth of a bell. He bowled right aft on his rounded shanks, and sprang to the grating abaft the wheel, holding the weapon high in the air that all might see what he grasped. "Captain," he shouted, "we've done you no ill; we're as sorry for you as if you were ourselves, and God knows we'd sarve you if we could, speaking our tongue as ye do and having our blood in ye. But *we* must stand first in this murdering business. We've got not a drop of water to spare, and what we have we mean to keep; so stand by! the first man as attempts to put his foot upon this here brig I'll shoot dead."

He sprang off the grating and then stood looking on and waiting, gripping his blunderbuss with both hands, with the muzzle of it grinning a little beyond the rail. A roar full of defiance and despair swept from the schooner's decks in response to his words. The swift

and beautiful vessel, easy as her canvas was, crept down upon us at the pace of two feet to our one. I saw her long tapering jibboom come slowly sliding past our quarter, and then, as it was no time now for mere staring only, I pulled a heavy iron pin out of the rail, and joined the sailors, who stood grouped along close to the main rigging. The height of the bulwarks prevented me from seeing; but I presently heard a loud shout alongside, then saw our captain take aim with his blunderbuss; but the powder merely flashed in the pan. It was the best thing that could have happened, I thought even at that moment, as I saw him bring his foot with a heavy stamp upon deck, and catch up his weapon by the barrel with a preliminary whirl of it round his head as he approached us. There was a short pause, a dead silence, indeed, whilst you could have counted ten, with nothing to break it but the brook-like streaming sounds of water murmuring behind the two gliding vessels; then followed a hurricane of wild shouts. In a trice the Yankees were aboard us, tumbling pell-mell upon our men, and striking to right and left with the desperation of madmen. We were not only too few for them; their rage of thirst converted them into veritable demons. Our decks were soon as bloody as if the conflict had been an action between two men of war. Here and there lay a motionless figure. There were constant shouts of "Show us the water! Show us the water! We don't want your lives! We want the water only!"

I hit out with the others, and have a clear recollection of saving my head from a blow that might have crushed it, by letting drive at the uplifted arm with such force that the fellow let fall his handspike with a howl of suffering as he sprang at me. I dodged him and

slipped, and in falling struck the back of my head against the coaming of the main hatch with a violence that stunned me. How long I lay insensible I don't know. By the time my consciousness returned the Yankees had done their work, beaten half our men into the forecastle, disabled most of the rest, broached our last water cask and *drained it!* and were now returned to their own vessel, carrying their wounded with them. Some of our fellows were badly hurt, though not dangerously so; but their wounds were of a nature to have made our brig, without fresh water, a very hell of suffering, had it not been for our happily sighting next morning a large sail, which proved a French sloop of war homeward bound, whose captain, on hearing our story, supplied us with water enough to last us for the rest of the passage. That the *Marie Richmond* may have met with similar good fortune, I heartily hope, spite of the usage her people gave us.

The thing looks dim with time as I turn my eyes back, yet though not half a century old it will be one of the freshest of all the memories my mind preserves down to the time of my death. To show the whole horrors of it one wants a big canvas. The Lord preserve us! to think *now* of making the voyage to Jamaica in a little brig!

PICTURES AT SEA.

Once, in the Bay of Bengal, I witnessed from the deck of a ship named the *Hougoumont*, a sight the like of which, had I read a description of it, I should have believed impossible in nature. The weather had been gloomy and sullen throughout the day; the swell was a sickly jumble of sombre green folds sulkily shouldering one another as they ran, and I noticed that they likewise moved very sluggishly as oil might, or water thick with ooze. A light air slipped from one swinging brow to another; but it had not weight enough to steady the canvas, and the ship rolled dismally, burying her sides with a regular see-sawing of the channels-lifted foaming; whilst the blows of the sails against the masts sent blasts of noise, like the explosions of nine-pounders, vibrating through the dusky air.

The look of the sky was more menacing than the warnings of the glass, low as the mercury stood. That a hurricane was not far off was not to be doubted; but we believed ourselves to be on the southern verge of it, and that we should, therefore, escape the central rage, though it was more than probable that we should encounter the lighter tempest flying off the black wing of the storm fiend as he passed. At five o'clock in the afternoon, though the sun then stood many degrees above the horizon, it was so dark that the men had to

feel about for the ropes. The ship having been stripped of her canvas, the noises aloft were small and weak, whilst the straining sounds from bulkheads and strong fastenings in the cabins and hold were so muffled by battened hatches and tarpaulined skylights that they scarcely caught the ear. The dismaying influence of the dark, still shadow on high showed strongly in the glimmering faces of the men. I was but a lad at the time and making my second voyage, and so was comparatively unseasoned; and I was awed and alarmed by this sullen gloom, whose preternatural complexion made you think of having floated into some sunless world of waters, over which no star ever sparkled, over whose circle of indigo no moon ever lifted a crimson brow, and whose atmosphere was to blacken yet as the deeper solitudes were penetrated. One yearned for a flash of lightning, for the growl of distant thunder, for any quality of the familiar to neutralize the superstitious fears inspired by this afternoon darkness, imperturbably tincturing its substance into the raven hue of midnight. We spoke in whispers. The mate receiving his orders from the captain, who delivered them in a low voice, would approach the men close before repeating them, as though he durst not break the stillness by bawling. There was an inconsolable sobbing of water alongside, and at long intervals, audible only at moments when the breathless hang of the ship upon the slope of some liquid brow left the fabric death-like, you heard a sort of moaning noise in the air, vague and indeterminable, echoes no doubt from the field of battle that was yet leagues distant.

At eight o'clock it was pitch dark. The atmosphere was now breathless. Though I had been on deck since six, I had not witnessed once in any quarter of the

horizon the faintest glare of lightning. A dim and rusty tinge of red had filtered into the west when the sun set; but the ugly illumination faded quickly. I went below to turn in, but finding that others of the watch I belonged to remained on deck I returned, and leaning over the poop-rail, stood straining my eyes against the amazing blindness of the night, in vain search of any break of radiance upon the sea-line. The confused swell rolled to the ship in a huddle of liquid blocks of blackness, amid which large rich clouds of phosphor flashed with the mild play of sheet lightning. On a sudden, a young midshipman who was standing near bade me, in a soft voice, look right astern. The ship's head lay about west-south-west, and over the taffrail in the ebon void there I witnessed a very delicate hectic, a kind of pinkish tinge, sifting through the blackness. It resembled the slow floating upwards of a prodigious body of red smoke, or of smoke coloured with the flames of a continent on fire immeasurably distant. Its space on the horizon when first viewed might be measured by the breadth of our taffrail; but in a short time it had rolled along past either quarter till it occupied the whole of the sea-line astern, meanwhile continually ascending as though formed of a substance apart from the clouds; and it grew clearer and brighter as its surface enlarged, and presently the whole of the eastern and southern sky was aglow with it. There is no colour or combination of colours that I am acquainted with by which I should be able to define the astonishing complexion of this light. I must speak of it as pink, though a painter would not thus express it. Its westernmost verge did not extend beyond our mastheads; nevertheless the radiance cast a phantasmal illumination upon the black sky down to the confines of the

ocean, and the sinuous sea-line was plain the whole horizon round, as though limned with a trembling sweep of a brush dipped in India ink.

In my brief eight years of seafaring life I have seen the ships I was in coloured by some strange, many lovely, and a few terrifying, lights; but the like of this midnight lustre, crimsoning the sooty heavens without revealing a single break amid the compacted masses of vapour under which it rolled, I had never beheld before, I have never beheld since, and to be plain—comprehending its cyclonic significance—I never wish to behold again. The mysterious magical light was upon the sails, upon the decks, upon the faces and forms of the crew; but the sea lay black as thunder under it; everything was shadowless in it; nothing cast an image. I extended my arm over the white top of a hencoop, but the limb threw no reflection. The radiance was circumambient, encompassing as mist is, but clear as glass. Looking upward I could see the vane at the royal-masthead standing like a black streak in the mystic sheen, and to the very flying jibboom end the ship floated as plain to the gaze as ever she could have been submitted by the full moon riding high.

What was the hidden luminary that shed this light? Whence arose this effulgent midnight mist? The illumination might have passed for the setting of the sun, going down on the wrong side of the world. It was an atmospheric effect, beautiful, thrilling, marvellous, and terrifying too. Many, I doubt not, have witnessed the same spectacle under the heights in which that pale strange shining happened. It was enough to make all hands of us suppose that a tempest of cyclonic force would burst upon us soon, and when in about half an hour the lustre, after waning into a tarnished orange, died out

into impenetrable blackness, we stood by ready for what we made sure was to follow. It blew, indeed, though not with hurricane power. There was so much lightning for fifteen or twenty minutes that the sky seemed filled with yellow and violet darts writhing their arrowy lengths like serpents as they vanished in the sea that flashed back whole sheets of fire to the lancing of the levin brands. The weather then grew commonplace enough, plenty of wet, a high foaming sea, the ship hove to under storm-trysail plunging and labouring with screaming rigging, an ashen dawn, with sulphur-coloured scud blowing up from the horizon, like smoke from the chimneys of a city of factories; and then at noon a fine day, a roasting sun overhead, and the vessel under fast-drying canvas, lazily stemming the high swell left by the gale.

So much for one atmospheric effect of an inter-tropical storm. One turns willingly to the gentle oceanic picture. As on shore so at sea; it is out of moonlight that you obtain the daintiest and most fairy-like effects. What is there tenderer in all nature than the spectacle of moon-rise on the ocean when the orb, standing hidden a minute or two behind some delicate line of vapour, whose extremities her beams colour to the aspect of lunar rainbows, sheds a silver streak of icy light upon the black line of the seaboard, until it looks like liquid ivory in the act of arching over in a gush of brilliant whiteness, as froth from the head of a breaker? I think one misses the best of the moonlight effects when on board a steamer. There is little or nothing in the fabric, for ever storming along, for the crystal beam to beautify. The structure, vibrating to the thunder of her engines, rushes onwards too swiftly for glorification by the cold rays of the bland satellite. It

is from the deck of the sailing ship that you command in perfection the wonders and splendours of the oceanic amphitheatre; witness in such wise, that your heart receives into it the whole spirit of the scenic grandeurs of that mighty stage; the glowing galleries of the west; the burning pavilions into which the sun retires; the cloud-pinion smitten into mild glory by Venus blazing jewel-like in a sphere of light, in which the adjacent stars are hidden as by moonshine; the gathering of the storm-cloud of a glassy and livid brow, with the restless lifting of the waters to its purple shadow; the flight of the falling body of fire, bursting into a storm of sparks, as it seems to strike the dark and distant sea-line over which a few stars are peeping, like eyes of gigantic shapes, whose shadowy forms the imagination will not find it hard to distinguish.

A sailing ship moving quietly onwards, or lying restfully in the heart of a calm, offers a surface upon which the magic brushes of the moon will paint a hundred lovely things. The clear, sharp shadows resemble jet inlaid upon the ivory of the planks. The spaces of splendour upon the yards between the black dyes, wrought by the interception of the reflection of the end of a boom, or the clew of a sail, are like bands of shining silver. There is nothing fairer than the spectacle of a sleeping ship with her canvas hanging silent from the yards, stealing out to the light of the moon that soars sparkling as if wet from the sea. The white glory gushes veil-like to the trucks high aloft in the clear obscure, and sinks wanly from sail to sail until the fabric, that a little while before was but a deeper shade upon the evening dusk, gleams out into an inexpressible loveliness of phantom form and airy substance. Stars bright as Coleridge's tiny sun amid the branches sparkle in brass and glass;

and along the rails there is a diamond twinkling of dew, and the sheen upon the canvas seems to overflow the bolt-ropes and frame the irradiated spaces with a slender atmosphere of light, delicate as mist. To the small swaying of the vessel the moonshine on her decks flows like running rivulets of quicksilver; the shadows alternate with the brightness, and the reflected filigree of the rigging crawling to the swing of the structure makes one think of the thin boughs of a leafless tree stirred by the wind against some snow-clad rise.

One moonlight effect I recall with delight. It was a dark, tropical evening; there was a light air blowing, of sufficient weight to keep the sails asleep, and a long troubled swell was heaving from the north. The stars shone very clearly; but the night lay dark upon the ocean, and you only knew where the sea-line was by observing where the luminaries ceased to shine. On a sudden a pale greenish hue in the east announced the rising of the moon. The rugged horizon ran in ink against that lunar dawn, and as the orb lifted her brilliant disk clear of the ebon welter, the outline of a sailing ship showed to the right of her. Soon she had climbed right over the vessel; her glorious wake ran fan-like in a turbulent surface of silver far along the heaving waters; and in the middle of this radiant river sailed the ship; the wind right astern of her; her yards square; studding sails out on both sides; but all of the deepest dye of blackness. There is nothing in language to convey this picture—to express this vision, rather: I see it now—the stately rolling of the dark pyramids of cloths, an occasional flash of white fire from her side or decks, and the mild glory over her stern showing in arches of silver under the curves of her sails. As she passed out of the moon's reflec-

tion she grew pale, mist-like, elusive. It is indeed the atmospheric effects of the sea, which make it so rich in symbolism. The deep is eternity materialized, so to speak. I always regard the ocean as a form of infinity rendered compassable to human intelligence by an apparition of confines which yet do not bound it. It is certain that we find in it our most pregnant imagery of life and death. The picture of the ship I have just written about abounded in human significance, the full force of which you would have understood had you watched the stately, spacious-winged fabric drawing out from the throbbing and palpitating river of silver moonlight, passing in spectral pallor, and vanishing among the folds of the liquid dusk astern. It was something to accept as an illustration of that form of unreality, which the poet indicates in speaking of life as a dream between a sleep and a sleep. But enough of such moralizing.

A fine effect is often produced by a conflict of moonlight and lightning. I witnessed a magnificent scene of this kind in the Indian Ocean, the island of Amsterdam in sight on the starboard quarter. There was a full moon in the north, and in the south hung a vast bank of clouds charged with fire and thunder. The early gusts of this electric storm broke away great wings of vapour from the shoulder of the main body, and sent them speeding athwart the moon. The shining of the luminary was ghastly, rendered so by the alternations of her own light, darting wildly over the edge of the driven clouds, with the quick dazzle of the southern flashes. Her beams seemed to be coloured by the electric leapings. It was the eye, of course, that carried the reflection of the blue and sun-bright darts to the northern illumination; but the effect was as though the lightning struck its own

hellish quality into the fabric of the silver beams, as they fell from the rims of the flying clouds. The combined illumination put a new and monstrous face upon the ocean. It made you think of a dead sea, complexioned to a very mockery of vitality by the light of such flames as those from which Milton's Fiend rose to steer his flight to dry land.

The effects of lightning upon the ocean are full of dramatic surprises. Moonlight is all sweetness and softness and blandness, but the revelations of the electric dart are startling, with something of a tragic nature in them. I was once becalmed in highly phosphorescent waters, but the surface was so still that the few gleams visible in the dark profound were faint as the reflection of a star riding upon the heave of the hidden swell. A cloud gathered overhead, and its sooty belly seemed to lean for support upon our scarcely swaying trucks. Suddenly it rained. One should spend some months in Jamaica to understand the meaning of such a "shower" as this. In a few moments our decks were half full of water, the scuppers sobbing madly; the roaring of the rain and hail smiting the ocean drowned all other sounds. The sea was so phosphorescent that a piece of wood dropped overboard chipped out fire as though it had burst into flames. Judge then of the effect of that Niagara fall of rain and hail! The ocean was flashed up into a plain of fire. It swept sparkling in one vast incandescent sheet to its limits, dimming into sickly sulphur as it approached the horizon. You might suppose that such an illumination as this would have revealed anything afloat upon it; but though I took a long look round, being deeply impressed by this sudden, wonderful burning of the ocean, I saw nothing; till all at once the darkness

was split by a flash of lightning that leapt from the clouds away over our foreyardarm and shot into the water, as it seemed to me, a league distant on our starboard quarter, and then to this mighty flare there sprang out upon the view a large ship, well within a mile of us, snugged down to her topsails. The sight made me catch my breath for an instant, for the wonder of it lay in her having been invisible until the lightning threw her up, so bright was the water with the lashing of the rain. One waited for a second flash to make sure; and I dare say, had she foundered before it came, there would not have been wanting people amongst us to swear that they had seen the Phantom Ship.

Indeed, it is quite possible that that grand old legend had its origin in some atmospheric effect due to lightning, moonshine, or fog. I have sometimes at sea, but more often in our narrow waters, watched a ship for a few moments, removed my gaze, and thinking of her presently, looked for her again and found her gone. This is one of those mysterious disappearances with which all seamen are acquainted. The evanishment, however, grows more perplexing when, after searching for the vessel, and believing her to be gone for good, you look for her again later on and find her almost in the same place. A thing of this kind would have been accepted by the early mariner as a miracle. He would have come home with a yarn about it as long as his arm, and so have fired the first poetically-minded wedding guest he could constrain with his eye with visions and fancies of a spectral ship. Be this as it will, disappearances and reappearances of this kind can be due to nothing but the subtle and imperceptible gathering of haze about the object. Mist will often take its complexion from the atmosphere. I have seen

a bank of haze of so sky-like an azure that, but for the curvature of the sea-line under it, caused by the deflective sweep of its base, I should have accepted it as pure blue air. White mists also of a slightly opaline tincture corresponding to perfection with the hue of the heavens beyond, I have detected only by the apparent depression of the horizon under them. A ship may be in the act of piercing one of these elusive veils with her flying jibboom when you first catch sight of her. She is as plain in your sight as your own vessel; yet when you seek her a minute after, she has vanished, and there is nothing in the sombre or sunny texture of the stuff she has entered to persuade you that what you are viewing is not the same brown or cerulean sky that stands over and on either hand of it.

To the mariner the fog is about the most obnoxious of all the conditions of his vocation. He is not likely to understand me, then, when I speak of its beauties; yet I must assure him, nevertheless, that many lovely atmospheric and other effects are produced on the waters by those luminous, enfolding bodies of vapour, the silence of whose white caverns is violated, in these scientific times, by the horrible braying of the steam-horn and the terrified fluttering of the engine-room bell. The kind of fog I have in my mind is the snow-like body of vapour, sometimes not very much taller than the Folkestone cliffs, sometimes so low-lying, indeed, that you may see the lofty spars of a big ship forking out of it into the blue air and bright sunshine, when the rest of the structure is as absolutely hidden as an object rolled up in wool. As a rule, very little wind accompanies these appearances. The mass of delicate, smoke-like, sparkling particles slides along softly, and it is therefore slow and tender in its revelations, and it submits nothing

which the manner of its discovery does not render beautiful. A man standing on the deck of a ship, in the heart of a soft and gleaming thickness, may not be able to see the mainmast from the distance of the wheel. The silence is peculiar, there is a certain quality of oppressiveness in it; nor is this wholly fanciful, for though there be a deep hush on the sea, yet, when you emerge into clear air, the difference between the stillness you have quitted and that which you have entered is instantly perceptible. Presently there is a little flaw, a chasm opens in the blind and luminous body of whiteness; the space of water, that glances like steel around the ship, enlarges its narrow horizon; there is a general brightening of light, though all the forward part of the ship is still hidden in the smother, and the only mast you can see looks as if it were sawed off a few feet above the deck. If the coast be nigh, or ships be at hand, there will happen now a slow stealing out of objects, and the sight is one which I think every man who has seen it will recall with admiration. Off Dover a ship I was aboard of sailed into such a fog as I am describing, and lay without motion for some hours in the midst of it. Any trickle of tide there may have been kept company with the vapour. There was no air, and the water came out of the thickness to the bends with the polish and gleam of oil. There was nothing to break the quiet but the distant, faint thunder of the wash of surf, or sometimes the remote tinkling of a ship's bell, or the rattle of a little winch, in some nearer craft, trembling upon the ear like the sound of musketry. Presently there was a movement of wind, and as the soft fingers of the draught of air tenderly drew aside the curtains of the mist, the pictures offered were a series of beautiful surprises. All about us stood the white

fog upon the sea in elbows and points, in seams, ravines, and defiles, like to the scarred and precipitous front of chalk cliffs; and now there would ooze out a little smack, whose shadow within the vapour held you speculating till the sunshine smote it into the proportions and colour of some cutter or lugger-rigged craft, with reddish mainsail gently swaying and a sou'-wester or two over the rail; and now as the snow-like thickness was rent afresh, some stout brig with black or chequered sides and a blue vein of smoke going up straight out of her galley chimney, and then arching over like the curl of a plume would be unveiled; and no matter how ugly the craft was that would be thus suddenly confessed, the witchery of the shining background of cloud entered her and submitted her as dainty and delightful, full of a grace that owed nothing to form; so that even a wretched little coaster with boom-foresail, and a suit of canvas as many-coloured as Joseph's coat, met the eye clothed with beauty, from the buttons of her trucks down to the tremulous silver of the reflection of her sails under her. Then presently glimpses of the land were to be had, the flash of sunward-staring windows ashore, the vivid green of verdure sloping to the edge of the white abrupt, a steamer with raking funnels cautiously coming out, the twinkle of foam upon the margin of gray shingle.

But you need a mountainous land to obtain the highest and choicest effects of fog revealments. The noblest show in this way that I ever beheld was off Mossel Bay on the South African coast. There the inland mountains tower to an elevation, that though they may be ten or fifteen miles distant, seems to enable them to cast the twilight of their Andean shadows upon the ship. It is like beholding the birth of a world, to

mark those Titanic peaks growing out of the white envelopment, as though creation were busy in yonder void, and shaping a vast territory out of sheer chaotic blindness.

Another lovely effect I have often gazed at with delight. I mean the vision of a ship hovering on the horizon, with an atmosphere of shivering brightness between her and the sea-line. Then, with the eye or with the telescope, she looks to be floating in the blue air. I have seen an airy space of pearl hanging like a cloud over the sea boundary, and I have watched it lifting and lengthening, one shining outline rising to another out of the sea, until three stately pyramids of canvas have been hove up; and then, presently, the hull rose to complete the symmetrical fabric, and thus apparently afloat in the azure, the ship has sailed towards us without appearing to touch the sea until the line of the horizon behind her was level with her counter. Refraction or some like quality productive of atmospheric effects will yield many queer and even startling ocean pictures. The mate of a vessel once called my attention to a ship, about four miles distant, right abeam. There was a light wind, and the day was wonderfully fine and clear. The stranger was under all plain sail, and her yards braced fore and aft, which enabled us to obtain a good view of her canvas. She was so incredibly distorted by the atmosphere as to be unrecognizable as a ship, in the sense, I mean, of that term. Her masts were curved like the prongs of a pitchfork; her hull rounded like the back of a hog; her sails ludicrously elongated; her jibbooms twisted into a figure beyond description. I have no doubt we presented the same convulsed appearance to her. Every man who saw her broke into a loud laugh; yet she was an object to put

some queer ideas into the imaginative brain, and I have little doubt that the paternity of many a singular superstition of the sea might be traced to such atmospheric caprices as this.

The effect of a red sunset upon a ship sailing quietly along is a choice study full of sweetness. The rigging shines like wires of brass, the sails like cloth of gold; there are crimson stars wherever there are windows. Against the soft evening blue she glides glorious as a fabric richly gilt. Sometimes the slow withdrawal of the western splendour from her may be watched; then her hull will be dark with evening shadow, whilst the light, like a golden veil lifted off her by an invisible hand, slides upwards from one rounded stretch of canvas to another, till, burning for a breath, like a streak of fire in the dog-vane at the lofty mast-head, it vanishes, and the structure floats gray as the ash of tobacco. In this withdrawal of the sun, and in the gathering of the shadows of night at sea, there is a certain melancholy; but I do not think it can be compared with the spirit of desolation you find in the breaking of the dawn over the ocean. The passage from sunlight to darkness even in the tropics is not so swift, but that the mind so to speak has time to accept the change; but there is something in the cold, spiritless gray of dawn that always did and still does affect my spirits at sea. The froth of the running billows steals out ghastly to the faint, cheerless, and forbidding light. Chilly as the night may have been, a new edge of gold seems to have come into the air, with the sifting of the melancholy spectral tinge of gray into the east. The light puts a hollow look into the face of the seaman. The aspect of his ship is full of bleakness; the stars are gone, the skies are cold, and the voices of the wind aloft are like

a frosty whistling through clenched teeth. A mere fancy, of course, which is instantly dissolved by the first level, sparkling beam of the rising sun. But then it is fancy that makes up the life of the sea, for without it what is the vocation but a dull routine of setting and furling sail, of masticating hard beef and pork, of slushing masts, washing decks, and polishing the brasswork? The spacious liquid arena is prodigal of inspiration and of delight to any one who shall carry imagination away with him on a voyage. There may be twenty different things to look at at once, and every one richer, sweeter, and more ennobling than the greatest of human poems to the heart that knows how to watch and receive. The shadow of a dark cloud over a ship, with the sunshine streaming white in the clear blue foaming seas around; the vision of the iceberg at night, colouring the black atmosphere with a radiance of its own; the tropical blue of the horizon, lifting into brassy brightness to the central dazzle of the sun; the airy dyes of the evening over a ship in the far loneliness of the mid-ocean—scores of such sights there are; but what magic is there in human pen to express them? The majesty of the Creator is nowhere so apparent; the Spirit of the Universe is nowhere else so present. Those who know most dare least in their desire to reproduce. What other response is there for the heart to make to the full recognition of the eye, but the silence of adoration! *

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FOUL OF A WATERSPOUT.

My friend, the second mate, told me this story as we paced the deck together. One thing had led to another, and something was said about waterspouts.

"Supposing," said he, "that Isaac Newton had fallen a-musing alongside a spout instead of under an apple tree;—do you think he would have fixed the law of gravitation as it now stands?"

"Explain," said I.

"Why," he answered, "it was the apple coming down that gave Newton the fancy of a magnetic central attraction; but if he had sat by a spout going *up*, you know——"

"Oh, I see," said I.

"Were you ever foul of a spout?" he asked.

"Why, no; never right in the thick of one," I replied. "I have seen those things, as I have seen icebergs, close enough aboard to make me wish them out of sight."

"Ha!" exclaimed the second mate, fetching his breath suddenly, with a look to seawards, as though his mind ran strong that way with the memory that rose up in him, "it was so much of a touch and go with us aboard a ship that I was once in, all through a confounded waterspout, too, that, for months after, I went about with a feeling in me that I was doing a violence to the laws of nature by being alive."

"Is it a long yarn?" said I.

"No," said he; "it's better than long, it's true."

"What about this waterspout, then?" I inquired.

"See here, now," he began; "I was third mate of an 800-ton barque, named the *Cashmere Merchant*. We were in the Bay of Bengal, a hundred and thirteen days out from Liverpool, and all hands ill of the sea. You know what I mean. Not so much sick *of* the ocean as sick *with* it. The complexion of every sailor's face made him show as though pea soup and salt horse had got hold of him at last, and were working out of his pores. The very ship seemed to express her loathing with every sickly roll, as though she was pining for the dry dock and the comfort of clean sheathing. It had been a heavy, sleepy kind of day. A little before noon I had thought I spied an ox-eye up in the dingy blue, and the appearance was so like that cyclonic portent that the skipper was of my mind till, after gazing at it awhile, it shaped out into an odd wool-white cloud, for all the world like the first puff of powder-smoke that breaks ball-shaped from the mouth of a fired gun, and floats so till the fingers of the wind draw it out, as a woman will skein wool between her hands. The strange lump of vapour blew away, and so there was an end of it. We had had some hot days, but this was the hottest of all. There was not a draught of air to be felt outside the eddying fannings of the sails as the vessel rolled, bringing the cloths to the mast in thunderclaps along with execrations from the cook in his galley, and a pleasant clink of crockery stealing softly up through the open cabin skylights. But the barometer stood high; and the sultry day, with its huddle of heavy clouds all around the horizon, and the dusty azure over the mastheads, and the body of the sun filtering through it, as though he

was some jelly-fish formed of fire, was not to signify in the face of that assurance.

"In the second dog-watch I came out of the deck-house, where I slung my hammock, with three apprentices, to smoke a pipe in the waist. It was too burning hot to linger anywhere out of the air. The sailors sprawled about the forcastle, panting like wounded dogs with the heat—half naked some of them, their mossy breasts bare, their breeches rolled up above the knees, for the comfort of bare legs in such a temperature. Now and then you would see a man come to the scuttle-butt and then turn from the dipper without drinking, with an eye of disgust, as though his thirst went deeper than there was any virtue in that old water, smelling stale as a duck-puddle, to fathom. All day long the heaped-up clouds had hung apparently motionless upon the horizon, as though some mighty besom had swept them off the sea and left them on the confines in a ring of hilly ridges. They were there still, but with a plain lifting of them since noon, some eight or twelve degrees. When the sun went down into the westward range it was all a boiling crimson, with a sort of smoky scarlet to the zenith, and the clouds themselves dark as thunder this side. But it was not until he was gone, and the night had risen dark and moonless, with a spare lean star here and there, struggling for life as it were, looking as weak as a brilliant light might, sunk some fathoms into the sea, that you saw how full of electricity everything was. In each heave of the dark swell there was a swarming of phosphorus in vast greenish cloudy puffs, and fires bright as lightning flashes broke from the barque's sides as she leaned to the folds rending the water along her. A corposant showed at the mainyardarm, flickering on the boom-iron there, and the reflection of it in the glass-like

darkness underneath made you think of some one-eyed goblin of a fish, that had floated up to attentively examine your craft, with a view to a lucid report anon to its horned and betailed captain, awaiting it deep down amidst the sea fires."

"A little too poetical," said I, interrupting my friend. "Where does this waterspout of yours come in, Master Grogblossom?"

"Pooh, pooh!" he exclaimed, "what do you want? A shipmaster's deposition? Hang baldness, say I. Look at a naked poll. There's sheer truth there, but confoundedly prosaic. No, no; give me the embellishment of hair, or, failing that, a wig. But the spout's not far off now, so stand by. I was in the port watch, of course, third mates always are, and the port watch came on deck at eight o'clock in the evening. The chief mate was a cheerful little Welshman—God rest his soul!—one of the most intelligent seamen I was ever associated with, with as tender a heart as ever beat under a velvet waistcoat, and eyes so bright that I'd sometimes think that the redness that ringed them was nothing but the scorching of the skin by the flashing of his gaze. We were very good friends, both of a rather poetical turn of mind, no very great rarity amongst seamen, though the confoundedly strained manliness of the sailor makes him feel sheepish, even to be suspected of a romantic humour now and again. The skipper hovered about till ten, then went below. I joined the mate, and we fell to quietly pacing the deck, talking of anything but the weather and the heat, and the calm, being sick of the things. No, sir; our conversation went to consideration of the sort of times we were to expect at Calcutta, and I was in the midst of telling him that I was thinking seriously of looking out for a mate's

berth aboard a country wallah, where the month's wage sounded tall in the shape of rupees, when he interrupted me by coming all on a sudden to a dead stand, whilst he cried, in a tragic voice, that was scarce more than a hoarse whisper, pointing with a little arm as he spoke—

"'My God, what is that?'

"His forefinger indicated a space of dusk that lay like an ink-stain upon the night that was dark, as the sea-line everywhere else was; and in the heart of this peculiar murky blotch I observed what looked to me to be two fine lines of flame close together, forking out of the sea, and lengthening upwards, as one watched with a kind of throbbing pallor whence they proceeded, though this last was very elusive, and noticeable only when the sight went a little to the right or left of it.

"'Hush!' said I, after straining my hearing a moment, whilst the mate stood watching stockstill, as though spell-bound. 'Do you hear it?'

"The noise I meant, though very faint, was audible enough amid the pauses of the flapping canvas on high. Think of a kettle boiling in a room next to the one you are seated in, and that will be the character of the noise I heard. As I spoke, there was a flash of lightning right betwixt the two fine lines of fire, and the wild glare threw out the ponderous folds of a great cloud hanging, like masses of smoke arrested and pressed down, above those strange and ever growing luminous stalks.

"'A waterspout—two of them, it looks like,' cried the mate. 'How does it travel? Why, by all that's precious! if its growth signifies its course, it's heading direct for the barque.'

"His vehement exclamations startled the men who had stowed themselves away about the decks for a nap, and you saw a flitting of dusky figures to the rail, and

caught a note of alarm in the half-smothered growl of voices which came along. Saving, always, the swing of the swell, the barque lay as dead on the sea as a light-ship, not an inch of way on her; so that there was nothing possible to be done in the way of manœuvring.

"'But waterspouts don't shine,' cried I, to the mate.

"'Yes, yes,' he answered; 'yonder does, anyhow. It is the phosphorus in the water. I have seen such things again and again, glowing as though they had got a streak of lightning stowed away in their coil.'

"He continued to look; then, with an oath, he cried out passionately that the appearance was heading for us, and, with a bound, gained the companion, down which he bolted, returning after a few breathless moments followed by the captain, who rose out of the hatch like a ghost, habited in his shirt and drawers only.

"Believe me or not as you will, but what I'm going to tell you is as true as that I, who walk by your side now, am a living man. The fire-tinctured stalks, as I will call them, had thickened with incredible rapidity, and looked five hundred feet high, distant as they yet were. There was a constant play of lightning over them, sometimes very fierce and brilliant, with sharp cracks of thunder, whose reverberations rolled over the polished undulations of the water with a sound of heavy bowls hurled along a resonant wooden stage. The stagnation around made the sight of that small rotating luminous tempest as wonderful as it was frightful. Every moment heightened the roar of the boiling at its base, and the indescribable yelling of the circular sweeping of the wind of this narrow tempest. Some of the men beat with handspikes furiously upon the scuttle

to arouse the watch below. I stood watching, scarce drawing a breath, captain and mate beside me, both silent. Indeed, there was nothing to be done. We ought, perhaps, to have fired a gun; but we hadn't such a thing aboard. The course of the spout was easily to be gathered by the sharpening of the mystical golden fires which illuminated the revolving columns, and by the whitening upon the sight of the bed of foam out of which those vast liquid trunks grew, and by the increasing uproar of the maddened and seething mass of spume, and of the thunder blasts over it following each jagged, barbed lightning-stroke with continuous detonations, comparable only to broadside after broadside delivered from a four-decked line-of-battle ship. The spout came along slowly—if a single spout it were—with its two flaming limbs and one dense head of vapour. There was a bit of hope to be got out of this, for it might break and perish ere it reached us.

"The captain cried, 'My God! what shall we do? How fast is it travelling, think you, Mr. Morgan?'

"'Eight miles in the hour—no faster, sir,' croaked the mate, in the voice of a man sentenced to death.

"'It'll be aboard us!' roared some one forward suddenly in a panical way, and the cry was instantly followed by a frantic rush aft of shadows, as the figures of the men looked. But the boatswain of the barque, whose tones I recognized, cried out, 'Jump for shelter, my lads! jump for shelter! Down with you under deck, or there'll be ne'er a life left to explain what hurt the ship;' on which many of the men sprang forward again, the captain saying nothing, and the mate as mute as I, for the lightning was crackling over our heads now, and the barque was plunging upon the heavy sea, flung in advance by the commotion, though

there was not a breath of air *yet*, as I live to tell it, and the spout almost within pistol shot!

"Well, I can only speak of myself now, for what followed was like a horrible nightmare, from which you start with the blood thick in your veins, without being able to recall a feature of the terror that awoke you. The mad impulse one got from the sight and sound of the spout, and its horrible accompaniments of whiteness at foot and blackness overhead, was for shelter, and my first spring was for the companion, with a cry to the captain and mate to follow me. I was scarce four steps down when there happened a shock as though an earthquake, right under the keel of the barque, had torn her into staves. Just for one instant my ear caught the inexpressible hellish clamour of tons of sweeping water, of spars snapping like pipestems—then wash! the companion way was filled in a breath, and down I went, swept along and into insensibility by a flood that was a small Niagara Falls in its way for weight.

"Of course I wasn't drowned; of course I regained consciousness; but that was not so wonderful as that I should have crawled out of the cabin like a soaked fleece, a sane man, with every sense taut in him, instead of a grinning and gibbering idiot. I gained the deck. The night was breathless. No sound came off the ocean, though the horizon hung black all around as before. It took me awhile to see, and then I observed that the barque was dismasted. The shadow of her deck stretched out before me—a sheer hulk! There were figures moving here and there. I halloed, and most of them came aft. But they were all too stupefied to answer questions; they muttered in a dazed way. Who was missing, what had happened more than that the barque had been stripped to the condition of a naked hull, was

not to be gathered till the dawn came. But before the light broke we had rallied sufficiently to man the pumps and keep them going. Talk of a wreck! Never did the sun rise upon a more pitiable sight than the barque made; three jagged stumps where the lower masts had been; a whole wilderness of wreckage over the side; bowsprit gone, the whole line of port bulwarks smashed flat, deck house, galley, long boat, quarter boats—all vanished. The captain and the poor fellow who had been at the wheel were missing, their fate needed no guessing. But we found the body of the mate, cruelly bruised and barely distinguishable as a human form, lying under a mass of gear. Well, to end the yarn, for it's nearly told, we passed three days of desperate pumping, for the vessel took in water as though her bottom had been a grating, and 'twas pump or sink, for we were without a boat. But on the morning of the fourth day a steamer hove in sight, spied us and came alongside. She was just in time; we were mere spectres, with the strength of such things, and I believe if the next relief of the pumps had been called there would have been no answer."

HAZARDOUS VOYAGES.

"LEAKY ships," says Captain Ridley, in a little work published in 1854, "are very disheartening to most seamen, and particularly to those not used to them. I had been at sea myself about twelve years before I knew what a tight ship was, and in some cases it was either pump or sink with us." Those were the days of timber frames. It is iron that has rendered the sailor timorous on this head in our time. When an iron vessel starts a butt, or is "holed" as they call it, the case of the people on board is very commonly a bad one. It is a hundred to one that she founders if she be out upon the ocean, away from tugs, or a convenient beach. On the other hand, it was no strange sight in the wooden period to pass ships with bright water gushing out of the scupper-holes, sure sign of their taking it in as fast as they ejected it, yet making no fuss with their signal-bunting. A glimpse of the deck as the fabric was inclined by the sea showed a handful of men hard at work at the brake or the fly, and so, spouting like a half-spent whale, the winged structure would go lazily rolling into the blue distance of the horizon.

Hazardous as must be a voyage in a leaky ship, the adventure, in a former age, was often stoutly and deliberately entered upon. I find a good example of

this in the account of a voyage from Hull to Rhode Island. The ship was named the *American*, and was loaded with coals, grindstones, bale goods, and hemp. In hauling out she took the ground, and lay straining for four days. When she was got off the crew had to rig both pumps, then, finding her very leaky, the whole of them left her. The captain went to the owner, who told him to carry the vessel out, as he could not consent to have her repaired at home. A fresh crew were shipped, and away went the vessel out of the Humber with a fair wind and tide. By this time she was pretty deep, and to prevent the men from being alarmed the captain hid the sounding-rod. Shortly afterwards he ordered the vessel to be pumped out, and went to work with the rest of the crew; but both pumps having been kept going for an hour without any encouraging result the men said that the ship was too old to suck, meaning that they would never be able to free her of water. The captain answered that the wind would prevent him from returning to the Humber, were he willing to do so, that they were now at sea, and must either pump or drown. He added that he hoped the ship would grow tighter presently, but that if she did not he would put into Harwich for repairs. This appears to have satisfied the men, who worked so heartily that, at the expiration of four hours, they found one pump, constantly kept going, enough. The season was the winter, the ocean the North Atlantic, the ship a crazy, leaky craft. The captain, minding nothing, headed right away for the American coast. He was beset with severe "Jack nor'westers," as he called them, and heavy gales from other points of the compass; his ship was coated with ice, and his crew half dead with cold; he had sailed on the 29th of September, and on the 24th of December

was in soundings, but mistook the coast, headed to the eastward with the pump going continuously, and the lead every half-hour, and anchored, in a black night full of frost and ice, in nine fathoms of water with the land close aboard. After further struggles, which brought the date into January—the whole passage occupied about three months and a half!—"we weighed anchor and worked the ship safe into the harbour of Newport, in Rhode Island, to the no small amazement of our merchant, Mr. Joseph Harrison, and all the gentlemen of that place."

I find an extraordinary instance of the triumph of spirit and perseverance in this way in William Nicholson's "Treatise on Practical Navigation," 1796. The vessel was his Majesty's ship *Elizabeth*. She was nearly wrecked by a gale of wind in the Indian Ocean whilst homeward bound, and was only kept afloat by incessant pumping and baling at the hatchways. In another storm they lost their rudder. The ship had to be "frapped"—bound around with ropes passed under and over her—to keep her together! She had left Bombay on the 16th of December, 1763; and she was off Spithead on the 11th of July—seven months *en route!* But in what condition? She was ordered to Chatham to be paid off, but before leaving Spithead it was deemed necessary to repair her upper works so that she might hold together as far as the Medway. A number of dockyard shipwrights and caulkers arrived on board, "and," says the author, "were surprised beyond expression to see the ship frapped fore and aft upon both decks, the decks and sides all covered over with canvas, and the ship so much broke or hogged, it was frightful to behold; and we thought it unsafe to take off any of the frappings." The caulkers and shipwrights

left the ship in a hurry, believing that she would sink under them as they stood upon her.

I am not sure that the spirit of the English sailor is not better illustrated by such stories as these, than by all that can be told of him as a gunner and a boarder. Next to the *Elizabeth* stands the *Pique*. What is finer, in all the records, as a piece of seamanship and a specimen of resolution, than the navigation by Rous and his men of that rudderless ship from the Canadian bay, where she struck, to St. Helen's, where she let go the anchor?

But the really hazardous voyage properly comes under the heading of ocean boating. There are dozens of instances of deliverances by the agency of the small boat, so miraculous that, related as fiction, they would be regarded as extreme experiments on the capacity of human credulity. Let me give a notable instance drawn from a narrative entitled "A small monument of great mercy, in the miraculous deliverance of five persons from slavery at Algiers in a canvas boat, with an account of the great distress and extremities which they endured at sea, by William Okeley, 1644." The author relates, in the course of his narrative, that having met with a Rev. Mr. Sprat, who was likewise captive among the Moors, he—that is Okeley—along with other Christian slaves, were permitted by their masters to have this clergyman to preach to them in a cellar. In this cellar seven of them—all sworn to secrecy—set to work upon a boat. They first provided a piece of wood, twelve feet long, cut in two, that it might escape observation, but jointed in the middle. Next they procured the timbers or ribs, which were each in three pieces, and jointed in two places. They also managed to obtain as much canvas as would cover the boat twice over, with

some pitch, tar, and tallow for converting it into a tarpaulin. The little structure—the full details of which are given, though I have no space for them here—was put together in the cellar, and then taken to pieces again. "It was a matter of difficulty," says the author, "to get the pieces conveyed out of the city; but William Adams carried the keel, and hid it at the bottom of a hedge; the rest was carried away with similar precaution." Eventually they got the boat afloat. There were seven of them; but, at the last moment, two of them said they would rather continue in slavery than be drowned, and so backed out of the adventure. "Taking a solemn farewell of our two companions left behind, and wishing them as much happiness as could be hoped for in slavery, and they to us as long life as could be expected by men going to their graves, we launched out on the 30th June, 1644, a night ever to be remembered." The company consisted of John Anthony, William Adams, John Jeplis, John the carpenter, and William Okeley. Five stout men in a canvas boat twelve feet long, without helm, sail, or compass, their provisions a little bread, instantly spoilt by the salt water that soaked through the canvas, and two goat-skins full of fresh water, to which "the tanned skins imparted a nauseous quality!" The description that follows is, of course, the familiar, but not the less terrible, story of the anguish of men in direful extremity. They managed to reach the island of Majorca nevertheless, then took ship to Gibraltar, travelled by the foot-post by land to Cadiz, and were ultimately taken on board an English ship, commanded by "Captain Smith of Redriff," and reached the Downs in September, 1644.

In these days of huge ocean steamships every allowance must be made for the general prejudice in favour

of tonnage. In former times a very small craft sufficed for a considerable voyage. "One of the East India ship's long-boats," I find in an old record of 1759, "rigged, of twelve tons, with only six hands and a mate on board, arrived express from the Brazils with an account of the arrival there" of some ships which were believed to have fallen into the hands of the French. The old salts "went" for the sea in whatever came to hand, and made as little trouble in their pinnaces or cock-boats of a gale of wind in the middle of the Atlantic as the Deal men of to-day make of the seas of the Channel whilst cruising about for jobs in their galley-punts or "knock-toes." Captain Bligh, of his Majesty's ship *Bounty*, was not one of those shining characters towards whose qualities one's heart leans affectionately whilst reading about them; but he seems to have embarked on that enormous boating trip, into which Mr. Christian and the others forced him, with but little concern, if it were not that he mistrusted his stock of food and rum.

The Lord Mayor of London, by way of satisfying de Mandelsloe *—who had narrowly escaped drowning—that seafaring people run many risks, told him a story of a Dutch seaman, whose sentence, for some crime, had been changed from death into banishment to the island of St. Helena. The Dutch sailor, dreading solitude, determined to hazard his life, at any rate, rather than be marooned. He dug up a coffin in which a sea officer had been buried the day before, and removed the corpse, then cut out a board, which he fitted to the coffin as a rudder, launched the ghastly bark, got into it, and floated out to sea. It happened that the ship to which he had belonged lay becalmed a few miles distant,

* "Harris's Collection of Voyages."

"and," continued Sir Edmund Wright, the Lord Mayor, "the ship's crew observing so odd a kind of vessel floating on the surface of the water, thought it had been an apparition, till, coming nearer and nearer the ship, they stood amazed at this unaccountable boldness of the man, who had ventured so far in two or three pieces of boards without being assured whether he should be received or not. It being put to the question, it was at last resolved he should be taken on board, which was done accordingly, and he returned to Holland, where he lived afterwards in the town of Horn."

This same Lord Mayor told de Mandelsloe another story, which much resembles the account I have already given of the escape of the five English seamen from the Moors in 1644. Four sailors who had been taken by the Algerines, resolved to make a small boat, and put to sea in her. They took five boards from the store-room—but what sort of store-room is not told, nor did his lordship name the scene of this adventure—of two of which they made a bottom for the boat, two more supplied the sides, and "the fifth for the prow and poop, their quilt serving for towe," in other words for oakum for caulking. When the boat was ready and launched they found it would only hold two; two only, therefore, could go. These were an Englishman and a Dutchman, who, having found means to provide a pair of oars, a piece of sail, and a slender portion of bread and fresh water, boldly put to sea, having, as the Lord Mayor said, "neither compass nor astrolabe," this latter being one of the instruments—Jacob's staff and the fore or cross staff being others—by which the ancient mariners measured the altitude of the sun. They had not long started before they were overtaken by a storm, before which they had to run; their bread was soaked into

pulp, they lost their fresh water, and their whole time was occupied in baling. They were eventually driven on to the coast of Barbary—a famous hunting-ground for the early sea-fictionists—where they set about to enlarge their boat, which they had barely managed when they were forced afloat again by the inhabitants, who wanted to kill them. For ten days they were washed about in an ark assuredly very much less seaworthy than the coffin in which the Dutchman had escaped from St. Helena, and were finally cast upon the Spanish coast, between Alicant and Valentia, where," concluded my lord, who related these tales as he sat banqueting, "being civily entertained by the inhabitants, they after came into England."

These strange "deliverances" recall a curious incident mentioned in some of the accounts of the Spanish discoveries and settlements. One of the adventurers was Vasquez Nunez, a person of good family, handsome, and a scholar. He had formerly sailed with Bastidas; but, after having received charge of one of the settlements, he was sentenced to death for betrayal of his trust, or for some offence not clearly stated. He effected his escape somewhat after the manner of the St. Helena Dutchman. A Spanish ship, commanded by Euciso, was taking in a quantity of bread for stores; Nunez put himself into one of the bread-casks and was shipped for forecastle use. He lay in hiding until the ship had put about three hundred miles between her and the land, and then made his appearance on deck. The captain, who had been strictly charged not to carry away any offender, was so vexed, that he threatened to set Nunez ashore on the first desert island he came to; but on some persons of distinction, who were in the vessel, interceding, he granted the

handsome adventurous young Spaniard his protection. This was possibly as hazardous a voyage as ever man embarked upon.

The perils of the sea were multiplied in olden times by the slowness of ships as sailers. Their holds were small, their companies numerous, and weeks or months of dull and languid "stemming" or "plying" often terminated in disease, famine, madness, and misery not to be expressed. Every week might witness a new thickening of marine growths upon the ship's bottom, causing the unwieldly form to move more slowly yet through the billows. "There are brigs," says a writer in 1800, "that will not sail above three knots upon a wind, one of which is to leeward; other brigs with smooth water and fine gales will not go more than four-and-a-half knots large." For my part, I would rather be with Dampier, flying before the tempest in his canoe, than tumbling, wind-jammed, for months in some of the old ships one reads about—in such a vessel, say, as the *Dolphin* sloop, which, when fallen in with, had been one hundred and sixty-five days at sea, though the distance she had to measure was no more than the ocean between the Canary Islands and New York. For one hundred and sixteen days the crew had been in a state of famine. They declared to the captain who rescued them, that the ship's provisions had been exhausted three months before. The *Dolphin* is but a type of the slow old tub, and the hazards of such voyages. The most dismal of all the marine narratives relate to such craft. There is some excitement in delivering one's self from slavery or death by entering a bread-cask, or sailing away in a coffin, or a canvas boat. A man under such circumstances is supported by the sense of romance, and the obligation of adventuring his life for the preservation of

it. But to be months at sea in an old butter-box, that won't go to windward, that is only able to run sluggishly out of one adverse wind into another, in whose lazarette the stock of provisions grows smaller and smaller every day, whose crevices swarm with the gaunt and horrible anatomies of starving rats, with eyes rendered crimson and sparkling by the fires of famine—let us be thankful that these are the days of twelve knots an hour, more or less.

FORECASTLE TRAITS.

THERE is truth in a short character of the English sailor, that I find in a little volume bearing the highly-marine name of "The Quid," published fifty years ago: "I have travelled far and near, and never knew one nation that could shake you by the hand like the English. It is not the hand, but the heart; and above all—which surpasses—is the homely clasp of a British sailor. It is not the hand and heart only, it is the soul. In the clasp you feel the man, and with it a desire not to relinquish (at least hastily) possession of what you feel assured is the genuine token of sincerity and true friendship." This sentiment certainly might have found a more elegant expression; but a neater form could not have added to its truth. For staunchness, simplicity, sincerity, *esprit de corps,* for all those qualities which combined produce on shore the honest friend, at sea the loyal messmate and shipmate, the English sailor I think is not to be matched. One reason may be that his life is like no other man's. He is locked up in a ship for weeks and perhaps months, sees the same faces over and over again, gets to know the qualities and characters of his associates, shares with them in whatever peril they may encounter, in their toil, their fooling, the pathos and the pleasures of the sea. The weariness of the calling may indeed produce quarrels and engender ill-

blood: but the influence of the long intercourse is sure in its effects; a man will do for a shipmate what he would not do for another. They may be fresh from a bitter fight, yet, let either be in extremity, the other will adventure his life for him; let either be in want, the other will share his last dollar with him. Were it otherwise, how could the English sailor have been the man he was, the man he is? Our British annals teem with illustrations of forecastle devotion, and in sailors' language the word "messmate" must always mean the word "friend." I will not, indeed, deny that steam has somewhat modified this afore-mast feature. The longest passage is now counted in days. Crews are rapidly paid off, change their ships, and are comparatively strangers one to another when they step ashore. But the sailing vessel is not yet dead; and whilst she remains afloat, journeying by way of the Cape into the Indian and Southern Oceans, or struggling round the Horn for South Atlantic waters, you may look with confidence for perpetuation of the old forecastle spirit.

There is one quality of the vocation, however, that seems to me to have shrunk very surprisingly of late years. I mean the humour of the sailor. That he was at any time the drinking, capering, jigging, Saturday-night, cans-of-grog, and wives-and-sweethearts' man we find him in the sea songs and the old tales is not to be supposed. This caricature of the salt grew out of war-like times, when the battle was everywhere raging loud and long, and when it was everybody's business to teach the sailor to believe that going to sea meant merely a long and jovial course of prize-money, jorums of flip, hornpipes, glory, Polly, and Greenwich Hospital. The literary and other artists over-did the portrait. They laid on their pigments with trowels. It answered the

purpose of the nation to accept the singular figure as a first-rate likeness. But I do not think that the sailor's humour, his power—whether by his manner, his face, or by the force of his calling—of importing into his mirth or misery an element of jocosity that rendered the relation of his experience, whether by his own or by the lips of others, unusually diverting, even when largely tinctured by pathos, was exaggerated at any time. At this day, it is true, you will sometimes find a laugh in his habits or theory of life, as, for instance, in a case heard not long ago by the licensing magistrates to whom application was made by an East-end landlord who declared that, though he prohibited dancing in his establishment and did his utmost to repress it, his customers were too much for him; they were sailors and sailors' sweethearts, and so soon as the music struck up they cleared away the tables, making nothing of the screws which secured them, and fell to sliding about with extraordinary appetite and enjoyment. But you must turn back our marine history by a few chapters for examples of what I may call the general characteristic of humour in sailors—for a particular flavour in speech and behaviour, as distinctly ocean-born as the breeze that blew them to port, or the foam that whitened their ships' wakes.

There is a story told of a blind sailor. It is worthy of a place in Elia's collection. The author of "Barbara S——" would here, I think, have found just one of those alley-like incidents of human life which his tender and plaintive genius delighted in. A man named Robert Howell was charged at the Surrey Sessions with stealing a bundle of wearing apparel and seven or eight pounds in money from Francis Cooke, a blind sailor. Cooke asked leave to tell his story in his own way. This being

granted, with a preliminary scrape of the foot and drag at a forelock he started thus: "Please your worship, my name is Frank Cooke. I have served his Majesty for many years, and have seen some hard service before now. You see this mark"—pointing to his right brow. "About five years ago we engaged with a French frigate, and when she had struck we went on board her; but, like a treacherous enemy, as she always was, when we got on deck they attacked us, and in the fight I was struck just there," here he pointed again, "with a boarding-pike. It entered my head and I fell overboard. On being taken up seven splinters, mixed with pieces of my hat, were taken out of my skull, and I immediately lost the sight of that eye; the other soon followed, and I became blind, but still remained on board as captain's mate. Bob Howell and me had been friends for years. We were messmates. When I was about to be discharged from the hospital ship at Sheerness, the doctor, knowing we were old friends, appointed Bob to be my guide and assistant to as far as Bristol. We left the ship in a boat, and landed somewhere in London, but I could not tell where. We had not gone far through the streets when we came to a gateway, and Bob took my stick from me, tore my pocket (where I had my money sewed up) off my jacket, and ran away with my bundle of clothes. After remaining on the spot for near two hours, I made my way as well as I could. As I went along I fell foul of a poor woman's tea-table, and had like to have thrown the poor creature's tea-things all about her. But I thank Heaven I did her no mischief. However, I told her my lamentable story, and she pitied me. A poor little ragged boy came up, and she begged of him to conduct me to Bow Street. The poor dear fellow led me along, and when I told him my story the good-

natured soul put a penny piece into my hand. We went along until I found myself on Bow Street office steps. 'Here is the place where you'll be sure to get redress,' said the boy. There was no one at the office then, so I asked for the next public-house, and he took me to one just opposite. 'I must now leave you,' said he. I was sorry for it. But, do you know, he soon came back again, and the dear generous fellow put another penny piece into my hand and bid me good-bye. Poor fellow, I shall never forget his generosity. I then got some porter with the money he gave me, and soon after was brought to the office, where I told my story. I have lived like a prince since." I think you find the simplicity of the typical old salt in perfection in this—the simplicity that made both the humour and the pathos of his nature. It is not so much that he was robbed by a shipmate, as that he was plundered by one who could steal from a blind man—and a fellow who could so act might indeed go to sea, and pull ropes, and furl sails, and fire off guns; but who would call him a *sailor?* The blind seaman was fully alive to this; the instant Howell spoke he cried out, "That's him! That's his voice! I know it well. *He* a British sailor!" I think I hear the scorn in those tones, how long since silent! and see the pity and scorn working in the rugged, honest, scarred, and sightless face, blindly turning its sorrow and indignation upon the skulking miscreant who had disgraced the fairest of the seaman's traditions, his honour and generosity as a shipmate.

You find the old qualities present in the yarn of a Jack arriving unexpectedly with his pockets lined. He had been away since the beginning of the war, and was supposed dead. Immediately on his arrival he sought his wife and child; but they had some time before quitted

the home in which he had left them, and nobody could tell him where they had gone. He made up his mind to discover them, and started on the seemingly hopeless quest. By chance, after much aimless wandering, he found himself in the neighbourhood of the Seven Dials, and, whilst passing a street, he heard a woman crying watercresses. He listened, believing it was the voice of his wife, but could scarcely credit his senses, until, on her approaching, he recognized her. Uttering a loud hurrah, he made a jump, snatched the basket from her arm, threw the cresses into the street, and hugged her to his heart. The poor woman was, of course, much affected, and wept copiously; but she was easily prevailed on to repair to a public-house and recruit her shattered nerves with a drop or two of gin. After Jack had plied her with questions, he hauled her away to a clothes-shop, rigged her handsomely from stem to stern, pitching her old attire into the street, then called a coach and rode away in triumph, with one leg out of the window, to show his quality, swearing "that, now he had found his wandering rib, he was the happiest dog alive, and d—— him, but Poll and he would have a night of it." Equally characteristic is the story of the sailor's wife who, having seen her husband off at Portsmouth, walked to London, with the intention of proceeding to Northampton. Her funds failed her, and, to complete her distress, a child was born. A couple of sailors hearing of her misery, and learning that she was the wife of a brother tar, gave her all the money they had, which, with a free passage by the coach, enabled her to reach home.

"We met, January the 6th, 1602, with a violent storm," writes M. François Pirard de Laval in his "Voyage to the East Indies," "in which one of our

seamen fell overboard, and his companion would have jumped after him if we had not prevented him; though, after all, I took his offer to be the effect of wine rather than of true affection; for there is but little friendship among seafaring men." So writes this old Frenchman, and I know not but that he may be right so far as regards the sailors of his own nation. But of English seamen either Pirard de Laval's theory is very much the other way, or the muse of naval history must be of extraordinary, almost impossible, nimbleness and fecundity as a liar.

Take such a brick as this as an example of a great and spacious building, surely not altogether in the clouds. In 1805 a seaman named Campbell, belonging to the *Tribune*, was tried by court-martial at Spithead for desertion, and sentenced to receive one hundred and fifty lashes. As the crime with which he stood charged upon the books of the ship precluded him from sharing in prize-money, the ship's company gave him, each man a dollar and the midshipmen five dollars each. "This act," adds the writer, "is characteristic of British seamen."

I am pleased, too, with this little old-world passage: "Yesterday the crew of the *Africa*, after being paid their prize-money at Portsmouth, carried the boatswain, who had behaved to them with great humanity, through the principal streets in procession, and then made him a present of a gold chain." One sees that pleasant gathering, the jolly tars rolling along, grinning as they go, perhaps a fiddle or two ahead of them, and a great drum whacked by a sailor with hearty love of noise, the chaired or elevated boatswain, with quid high in cheek, gazing like Micawber, "not severely," and trying to look as if, on the whole, he was used to it.

Much later on, though still in the same century, there was another boatswain, possibly of the pattern of the gentleman with whom the mariners marched in procession. It was at the close of the first American war, and our boatswain, who had belonged to a seventy-four, on being paid off came to London, repaired to Monmouth Street, and there purchased a secondhand Court dress of a Knight of the Garter. His hair was dressed by a skilful artist, and in full fig he went to Drury Lane Theatre, and seated himself in one of the stage boxes. In all probability the honest seaman would have continued to excite the awe and reverence of all beholders as a person of honour, a spark of quality, but for two lively hearties who were seated in the front of the two-shilling gallery. They had belonged to the same ship as the nobleman in the box, and, after a good long stare at the splendid figure, they came to the conclusion that he was an old acquaintance. They could give no heed to the performance; they were lost in contemplation of the well-laced magnificent creature, sitting lonely and majestic in his box. There was something so astonishing in the transformation, however, that doubts arose in their minds, and they determined to hail him, to make sure one way or the other. Accordingly, putting his hand to the side of his mouth, one of them sang out, "Ho, the bo'sun of the *Achilles*, ahoy!" to which the boatswain, forgetting his fine clothes, immediately answered, "Hallo!"

But let me give foreign Jack a turn. If you here and there in history meet with an English sailor robbing a blind shipmate, so do you also here and there meet with a "Dutchman," to use Jack's generic term, behaving as if he were a British seaman. A fine example offers in the following anecdote. When D'Estrées bombarded

Algiers, De Choiseul was ordered into the harbour to set fire to one of the enemy's ships. It was a mighty desperate undertaking; the enemy's ships surrounded him, and he was taken prisoner. He was sentenced to be blown to pieces at the cannon's mouth. An old pirate —of all men in the world!—who had formerly been De Choiseul's prisoner, and kindly used, followed the Frenchman to the place of execution, and, whilst the people were lashing the captive to the gun, ran to him, and holding him in his arms, called to the gunner to make haste; "For," said he, "since I cannot save my benefactor, I will perish with him." The effect of this piece of heroism on the mind of the Dey Ghezzar was such as to procure the prisoner's release. I believe this story to be true. Had De Choiseul related it of a fellow-countryman posterity might please itself in deciding upon it. The French imagination of that period, however, devoted its powers of exaltation to heroes living nearer to Paris than the Algerines. But all the good pickings in this way are in the English naval story. "Your lordship," writes Captain Dalrymple, December 18, 1779, to Lord George Germaine, "will pardon my mentioning an instance of an elevated mind in a British tar, which amazed the Spaniards, and gave them a very high idea of English valour. Not contented with one cutlass, he had scrambled up the walls with two, and meeting a Spanish officer without arms, and who had been roused out of his sleep, had the generosity not to take any advantage, but presenting him with one of his cutlasses, told him, 'You are now on a footing with me.'" There is a singular sequel to this story. Sir Peter Parker, hearing of this, appointed the man to be boatswain of a sloop of war. A few years after, either in a fit of madness or intoxication, he forgot himself,

and struck his lieutenant with his fist. For this he was tried, sentenced, and executed! So it is stated in Schomberg's "Chronology." A genuine example of the curiosities of marine literature!

There is a story of one Daniel Bryan, an old seaman, who was at the Siege of Acre. At the first storming of the breach by the French, one of their generals was killed. The Turks in triumph cut off his head, stripped and mangled the body, and left it to be eaten by dogs. It lay exposed for several days. When parties of the sailors who had been on shore returned to their ship, old Dan would repeatedly ask them why they had not buried the poor Frenchman's remains? To which their only reply was, "Go and do it yourself." At last Dan swore he would, observing that, after all, the French always gave their enemies a decent burial; they were not like those etcetera Turks, who left a man to rot above board. Next morning he dressed himself in his best as if bent on a pleasure jaunt, and obtained leave to go ashore with the surgeon in the jolly-boat. He was watched by the boat's crew, who gave the following account of his proceedings: The old man procured a pickaxe, a shovel, and a rope, and insisted on being let down, out of a porthole, close to the breach. One or two of his companions, who were younger, offered to attend him. "No!" he answered. "You are too young to be shot at. As for me, I am old and deaf, and my loss would be no great matter." Dan was accordingly slung and lowered, the firing being very active at the time. His first trouble was to drive away the dogs. The French perceiving him took aim, but an officer guessing his intentions, was seen to throw himself across the file. Instantly the thunder of the battle ceased, and there was a death-like calm whilst the old sailor hid the remains of

the body in the earth. He covered the grave with mould and stones, placing a large stone at the head, another at the feet, and then drawing forth a piece of chalk he laboriously wrote, "Here you lie, Old Crop!" This done he was hoisted into the town, and the firing recommenced. A few days after Sir Sidney Smith sent for old Dan to his cabin.

"Well, Dan," said he, "I hear you have buried the French general?"

"Yes, your honour."

"Had you anybody with you?"

"Yes, your honour."

"Why, I was told you had not."

"I had, your honour."

"Who had you?"

"God Almighty, sir."

"Give old Dan a glass of grog."

The venerable salt's story ends in the pleasant old way: "He is now a pensioner in the Royal Hospital at Greenwich." What a noble race they were! How loyal, generous, brave, sincere! Is there any change in their qualities? Only one, I think; the old humour seems to be dying out.

THE OLD SEA DOG.

THERE is a story, not very widely known, of the famous old Admiral Van Tromp. He was a big, heavy man, and was challenged by a French officer, a thin, active, little fellow, to fight a duel. "We are not upon equal terms with the rapier," said Tromp; "but call on me to-morrow, and I have no doubt we shall be able to adjust matters." The Frenchman called, and found the Dutch admiral bestriding a barrel of gunpowder. "There is room enough for both," said Tromp, pointing to the other end of the barrel. "Sit down. Here's a match, and, as you are the challenger, give fire." The Frenchman was thunderstruck by this terrible mode of duelling, but, as the Dutchman said he would fight in no other way, the combat was abandoned.

There was never a completer sea dog than old "Trump," as they used to call him; and the above story is extremely characteristic of the race to which he belonged. I cannot help thinking, however, that the mariner of the old school has been described to us with features very greatly exaggerated. Down to quite recent times it was held imperative that the sailor should be represented as a man with a large, fiery bottle-shaped nose, little blood-shot eyes, driven deep into their holes by the gales of wind they had stared into, a capacious mouth, stretching from ear to ear, a face embellished

by those peculiar forecastle growths termed "grog-blossoms," a cheek distended by a large junk of tobacco, the whole improved by an expression of tipsy hilarity. The caricaturists never spared the sailor; particularly in George Cruikshank's hand did he fare ill. The drunken seamen of Cruikshank are very drunk indeed, and his virtuous Jacks are made diabolical by their ugliness. Cruikshank's pigtails, too, are as thick as the shrouds of a line-of-battle ship, and his wooden legs have something of the inexpressible quality of the little tail which curled so tightly that the dog it belonged to couldn't keep his hind legs down.

No doubt the old sea dog had an existence; but it is difficult to find any correspondence between the image of him that our imagination possesses and such true and faithful portraits of him as are preserved. There are assuredly no Trunnions in the galleries of England's sea worthies. Lord Nelson's face is full of refinement, tenderness in the expression round about the mouth, and a pensiveness of gaze as one seems to find it in his picture by Abbot. Drake had a sweet, noble, cultivated, and commanding face. There is, perhaps, something heavy and phlegmatic along with the Judaic twist of lineaments in the countenance of Lord St. Vincent; but the brave, resolved English countenance falls very far short indeed of such idealisms as Smollett and other sea novelists have inspired. In Duncan's large, eager, intellectual eyes and cast of face, that reminds one of Dean Swift's, there is no hint of Pipes or Hatchway. Admiral Barrington looks like a judge in Copley's picture. Sir Sidney Smith has an almost effeminate delicacy of features. Northcote's Lord Graves has chins enough to furnish out an alderman; but the inspirations of the rum-puncheon may be sought for in vain in this

honourable, sturdy old visage. The face of Saumarez is full of refinement and breeding. Sir Roger Curtis completely answers to Hazlitt's definition of the gentleman by appearance. Boscawen, in Reynolds' picture, looks at you with noble eyes, and a sort of wistfulness never to be encountered in one's fancies of the old sea dog. Keppel comes somewhat near to the conception of the bull-headed seaman; but his is the face of a great mind, and there is no art in caricature to vulgarize such lineaments. I could go on referring to Kempenfelt, who went down in the Royal George, to the singularly handsome face of Lord Hawke, to the hard, shrewd, dried-up, open-eyed, heavy-nosed countenance of Sir Charles Saunders, to Lord Gardener's clear cut profile, to the portraits of Pocock, of Captain James Cook, with his rugged, penetrating, scowling look; of the fat and smiling Admiral Hughes, of the noble Vernon, with his thick eyebrows and hawk's bill nose; of Rooke, of Lord Keith, of Harvey, of Tyrrel, of Nugent, and a hundred others of the braves of olden times. They were all sea dogs, and old sea dogs. How in the face of the portraits of these worthies, who are, physically, entirely representative of the old race of sailors, posterity can go on accepting Trunnion as a strictly accurate type it is difficult to understand.

The old sea dog was a gentleman who swore rather freely; but it may be questioned whether in other respects he differs very much from later generations of sailors. He was, perhaps, a rougher seaman than the man who is fortunate enough to flourish in the days of steam. His accommodation on board ship was not very good, his food was exceedingly indigestible, and, as we all know the very large part the stomach plays in the economy of the human temper, possibly not a little of

the bad language of the old sea dog may be attributed to pea-soup and salt junk. His ship was incessantly fighting other nations' ships, and there is a quality in gunpowder smoke that has a very sobering influence on sentiment. He lived very close to death. He was frequently seeing his shipmates and intimate associates shot down by his side, and spectacles of this kind do not tend to the refinement of human nature. Besides, he was himself often wounded and losing an eye, or a leg, or an arm. Falconer, in his "Miscellanies," includes a poem which he calls "The Midshipman." It is the sketch of the depths of a man-of-war, about a hundred and thirty years ago. The "mid" is to dine with the captain, and the poet sketches him at his toilette thus:

"To him Japan her varnished joys denies,
Nor bloom for him the sweets of Eastern skies;
His rugged limbs no lofty mirror shows;
Nor tender couch invites him to repose.
A pigmy glass upon his toilet stands,
Cracked o'er and o'er by awkward, clumsy hands,
Chesterfield's page polite, 'The Seaman's Guide,'
An half-eat biscuit, Congreve's 'Mourning Bride,'
Bestrewed with powder, in confusion lie,
And form a chaos to the intruding eye.
At length this meteor of an hour is dressed,
And rises an Adonis from his chest."

Out of such gloomy caverns as this sprang the noble race of Britannia's sea warriors. It is not wonderful that the old sea dog should have been lacking in something of the refinement and graces of manner which distinguish his successors. Yet I think we ought to protest against the theory that he was the compound of rum, oaths, and ugliness, which posterity is prone to consider him. It is sailors, however, who have helped on the notion. Literature and the sea have this

in common—that whatever is ridiculous in the callings, and held in contempt, is due to the descriptions of the man of letters and of the mariner. Soldiers, engineers, lawyers, farmers, architects, clergymen, schoolmasters do not write books, holding up their particular callings to scorn by exaggerating the features of the vocation. But authors have never spared one another, and if we hear no more of men of letters sleeping two in a bed, or writing with their arms thrust through a blanket whilst their only shirt was at wash, it is, perhaps, because the literary man is now able to have a bed to himself, and to possess shirts enough to count. The ludicrous and somewhat dishonouring figure of the old sea dog is a sketch in black and white by the old sea dog himself. Smollett, though he served in the cockpit, was long enough at sea to know the sailor's life and to become a sailor, and his drawings have been accepted as models. I should think they are about as near to the truth as Cruikshank's caricatures. Marryatt made much of the traditions originated by the admirable author of "Roderick Random." Michael Scott goes further yet, and in Lieutenant Sprawl presents us with a scarecrow by whose side the boatswain, Mr. Chucks, is fit to move in what Winifred Jenkins would have called the "quintassence of satiety." As though the measure of Jack's sufferings were not overflowing, Douglas Jerrold must needs, out of his memory of the brief days he had passed at sea, generate the William of "Black-eyed Susan!"

I return to Trunnion. He is the typical mariner of the novel, and in proportion as succeeding artists have caught the colours and graces of this extraordinary presentment, so have their endeavours been deemed successful, and their strokes commended. More than

one retired naval sea captain in fiction has mounted guns upon his lawn and fired them off whenever occasion demanded, and it is not hard to perceive where these old sea dogs found the notion. Trunnion lodged himself in a house surrounded by a ditch, over which was a drawbridge, and filled his courtyard with swivel guns called pateraroes, which were always kept loaded with shot, under the direction of Lieutenant Hatchway, who had lost a leg whilst serving as first lieutenant on board the commodore's ship. His head-servant, as every reader of Smollett knows, was Tom Pipes, who had been his boatswain's mate, and whose chief business seems to have been to regale his master's ear with the dulcet notes of the boatswain's whistle. It is easily conceived that a course of Trunnion, Hatchway, and Pipes, would persuade the landsman that your true tar is not only a man who swears consumedly, but who borrows nearly the whole of his vocabulary from the language of the sea. It is unhappily difficult to find any speech that Smollett has put into the mouths of these three sailors which will bear quoting; but surely it is inconceivable that the most nautical of the old sea dogs could have been so violently professional in their jargon as were Trunnion and his two associates. "Hatchway," cries the commodore, whose "language" must be omitted, "I always took you to be a better seaman than to overset our chaise in such fair weather. Blood! Didn't I tell you we were running bump ashore, and bid you set in the lee-brace and haul upon a wind?" "Yes," replied the other, with an arch sneer, "I do confess as how you did give such orders after you had run us foul of a post, so as the carriage lay-along and could not right herself." "I run you foul of a post?" cried the commander. "You're a pretty dog, ain't you, to

tell me so aboveboard to my face? Did I take charge of the chaise? Did I stand at the helm?"

And so they go on. It is excellent fooling. There is no richer humour in English literature, and if sailors ever did talk in any time of British maritime history in the fashion Smollett would have us believe, one would wish them to speak as he makes them. But I cannot persuade myself that the Vernons, the Hawkes, the Rookes, the Monsons, the Mansells, the Howes, the Jarvises—that these and such men, and the famous and valiant commodores, captains, and lieutenants who fought under them, were as Trunnion and as Hatchway, leaving Pipes to represent the forecastle. Smollett's commodore is an exquisite libel upon Jack, and the country has believed in it as truth for generations. There is hardly less humour in this than in the portrait itself. The profession of the sea is represented by many noble families in this kingdom, and it would be interesting to know their opinion of a theory which establishes their progenitors as stout and valiant hearts, cased in frames covered with spirituous pimples, whose mouths are crammed with profanity and extraordinary references to spritsail yards, lee-braces, hencoops, and sheet anchors.

There is another delightful prototype in the shape of Tom Bowling in "Roderick Random." Probably Smollett exaggerates the costume as he does the dialect. If not, the old sea dog must have gone queerly clad. When Lieutenant Bowling is met by Roderick, the dress of this naval officer consisted of a soldier's coat that had been altered by the ship's tailor, a striped flannel jacket, a pair of red breeches japanned with pitch, grey worsted stockings, large silver buckles, a silver-laced hat, a black bob-wig in buckle, a check shirt, a silk handkerchief, a

hanger, and an oak plant under his arm. It was in this costume that Lieutenant Bowline took Roderick to see his dying grandfather, who was surrounded with weeping relations. Captain Oakum is another astonishing example of the old sea dog in fiction; but the oddest of all these wonderful old fellows is Captain Crowe, who is so fascinated by the armour and adventures of Sir Launcelot Greaves, that he commences knight-errant on his own account. Smollett might have spared the sailor this stroke. Perhaps he conceived that the jest would not pass with the Royal Navy, and so he dubs Crowe a merchantman. Merchant captains have made fools of themselves in all ages; but it is difficult to conceive a skipper posture-making as Don Quixote, delivering damsels in distress, and being charged before magistrates as a highwayman. The example, however, was too strong. Smollett had set up his standard. The world accepted it, and succeeding novelists confirmed it by cutting and trimming to its pattern.

Let us take a glance at another commodore, and at his companion, both old sea dogs in the purest sense of the traditionary nature of that character. He is, to start with, a gallant old fellow, and is dressed in faded nankeen trousers, discoloured cotton stockings, shoes with corn-holes cut in the toes, an ill-washed and rumpled white waistcoat, an old threadbare blue uniform coat, white and soapy at the seams and elbow, a dingy brown silk neckcloth, and an old white beaver with very broad brim, the snout of it fastened back to the crown with a lanyard of common spun yarn. This is Commodore Oakplank, and stands for a picture of a sea dog of from 1780 to about 1820. His companion is Lieutenant Sprawl. This gentleman wears a very little hat with scarcely any brim, the remains of the nap bleached by

a burning sun and splashed with spray, but garnished nevertheless with a double stripe of fresh gold lace, and a naval button on the left side. Add to this an old-fashioned uniform coat, long-waisted, with very short skirts, a dingy white waistcoat, a great horn eyeglass, ancient duck trousers extending about half-way down the calf of the leg, "leaving his pillar-like ankles conspicuously observable."

Such are two of Michael Scott's portraitures. He gives Old Sprawl a nickname that Smollett would have relished, but neither of these gentlemen talks as his progenitors in fiction talked fifty years before. The sea dog was mending his manners. And yet, coarse and dishonouring, however humorous, as are the Trunnions, Oakums, Hatchways, and the like, better surely the most rampant and hectoring amongst them all than such a character as William in "Black-ey'd Susan." To represent the typical sailor as a drunken, brutal, blaspheming son of a swab is not indeed extremely complimentary to the two services at large. But if the character of the true salt is ever seriously traduced, it is by the dramatic virtuous sailor. I would sooner bear with Trunnion in his maddest tantrums for a fortnight than endure ten minutes of Sweet William. "Ah," he says, "if my Susan knew who was here she'd soon lash and carry, roused up by the whistle of that young boatswain's mate, Cupid, piping in her heart;" and then he goes on: "May my pockets be scuttled if I didn't think so! His Beelzebub's ship, the *Law!* She's neither privateer, bombship, nor letter-of-marque; she's built of green timber, manned with loplolloy boys and marines; provisioned with mouldy biscuit and bilge water, and fires nothing but red-hot shot; there's no grappling with or boarding her; she always sails best in a storm,

and founders in fair weather. I'd sooner be sent adrift in the North Sea in a butter cask, with a 'bacco-box for my store-room, than sail in that devil's craft, the *Law*. My young grampus, I should like to have the mast-heading of you in a stiff north-wester!"

Of all forms of nauticalism this is the most disastrous. It is inconceivable that such fustian should ever have been produced in and admiringly received by so great a maritime nation as this. If we are to believe in a sham let us stick to the best specimens and hold by Trunnion and Bowling. Seeing, however, what the old sea dog has done for us and for our country, it is but right, I think, that we should endeavour to cleanse him of something of these impurities of pigment, which the caricaturist has trowelled upon his canvas. Why people decline to believe that the old race of sea dogs could not have been gentlemen, simply because they were sailors, is not intelligible unless you make the odd, arch humour of Smollett responsible for the tradition. For my part, whilst I freely acknowledge them to have drunk freely and sworn tempestuously, I must take leave to consider them to have been the finest race of gentlemen, in the sense of the word whose definition admits of every fine and manly quality short of polish, that this country has ever produced.

MARINE PUNISHMENTS.

The days of whipping and pickling poor Jack are over. Voluminous Acts of Parliament now shelter the seaman, who, indeed, is represented as being so very philanthropically legislated for, that owners have no remedy against him but the magistrate and the prison-cell, whilst the captain has nothing to depend upon but the official log-book, the revolver, and those ancient arrangements originally called bilboes. It was very much otherwise in those by-gone times when the fine old English gentleman flourished. There are extant certain instructions drawn up by Robert, Earl of Essex, and delivered by him to Howard, Lord High Admiral, to be read twice a week to the crews of ships after Divine service. "Picking and stealing," says my Lord, "you shall severely punish, and if the fault be great, you shall acquaint us therewith, that martial law shall be inflicted upon the offenders." Captains are also to forbid swearing, brawling, dicing, and the like, the wrong-doers to be punished. Now, what sort of sentences were delivered in those days? Sir William Monson, who was at sea a little later than that time, has told us: "A captain," says he, "may punish according to the offences committed, viz., putting one in the bilboes during pleasure, keep them fasting, duck them at the yardarm, or haul them from yardarm to yardarm under the ship's keel,

or make them fast to the capstan and whip them there, or at the capstan or mainmast, hang weights about their necks, or to gag and scrape their tongues for blasphemy or swearing. This will tame the most rude and savage people in the world." So one should suppose. Until I met with this passage, I was under the impression that the punishment of "keel-hauling" originated with the Dutch. To keel-haul is to drag a man under a ship's bottom, "at pleasure," until the expression of his countenance, that has turned from purple into black, warns you that one more dip must settle him. This villainous practice was common among the Dutch. Very often it was inflicted as one only of several other punishments. In Roggewein's voyages, a man falls drunk and abuses the cook, and in a fury stabs himself. The utmost care was taken of him till his wounds were cured, that he might be made an example of. When recovered, he was treated thus: First of all, he was declared infamous at the foremast; he was then keel-hauled three times; then received three hundred lashes; and finally, his right hand was fastened to the mast with his own knife. As though all this should not suffice, he was chained to the forecastle and only half starved, the captain not choosing that he should die, as he intended to set him on shore on the first barren uninhabited island they came across. Such an island was encountered off the coast of Brazil, about three leagues from the coast, and to it the miserable creature was carried and there left to perish.

In the account of Jaques le Hermite's travels by sea, a surgeon is suspected to have poisoned some of the crew. To make him confess, the Dutch tortured him by fastening heavy weights to his feet, drawing him to a great height and then letting him drop. Puzzled by

his obduracy and insensibility they searched him for a charm, and found a bag hanging round his neck containing the skin and tongue of a serpent. On this being taken from him he confessed, and was beheaded.

I am not sure that "marooning"—that is, putting a man ashore on a desolate rock to die of thirst and hunger—was not the most savage and cruel of all the old punishments. Sir Francis Drake offered Doughty the alternative of being marooned or losing his head, and the man chose death by the sword. It is not in the power of the imagination to conceive of the anguish of a man left to perish on a barren island, seeing his ship gradually sinking in the distance and fading out of sight, gazing round the horrible solitude of the sea, seeking for water and finding none, for food, and perhaps beholding scarce so much as a fragment of weed. It is noteworthy that, brutal and revolting as were the morals and practices of the old filibusters, their discipline, as arranged among themselves, was mild in comparison with the punishments captains of ships were licensed to inflict upon their companies. Their code established a principle of perfect equality, and, so far as I can collect, the penalty of death was only imposed upon deserters, and upon any one who introduced a woman disguised into the vessel; this article being due to a determination of these rogues to extinguish the least occasion for jealousy, so that they might all live together in brotherly love.

No doubt, the sailor, in former times, required a very taut hand. We were incessantly at war; the press was constantly very hot, and the King's forecastles were filled with men who had been torn from their wives and families, who had been forced out of peaceful trade to ply the small-arm or to man the great

ordnance, and who, until time had worn out their rage and grief, were very fit for treasons, stratagems, mutinies, and intestine wars. But the ferocity with which they were handled in olden times was monstrously in excess of their guilt; and that their patriotism should have brightly burned in so dark and suffocating an atmosphere of brutality must prove, I think, that the application of such a gentle discipline as that of to-day would have won for this country even grander results yet than were achieved for her by those generations of mangled and pickled tars. We read easily of five hundred lashes; but it was a fearful flogging! "Seven bells (half-past seven) came," says the late James Hannay, "and the hands were turned up to attend punishment. The ship's company gathered together in the waist and gangways in dense masses, close up to the mainmast. The officers with swords on were on the quarter-deck. On the starboard side of the deck, just abaft the gangway, stood the apparatus of punishment; two capstan-bars secured against the bulwarks, with a grating between them, and a grating below, constituted the simple preparation. Near this was the master-at-arms, with a little cup of water for the benefit of the victim; and two boatswain's mates were in attendance with canvas bags containing the implements of torture. Take away God's sky, and the free sea round about, and you might have fancied you were in the Inquisition Chambers in their palmiest days!"* The cruellest feature of this punishment was the irresponsibility of the captain with regard to the number of lashes ordered. A passionate man might go on increasing the beating as his rage was augmented by the sullen curses and mutterings of his sufferer, and there was no

* "Singleton Fontenoy."

law, short of the surgeon's finger on the culprit's pulse, to tell him when to stop. Marryatt's novels abound in instances of brutal captains whipping men's backs into rags for offences small enough to be fully expiated by stopping a day's grog. There has been much said—and very properly said—about the ruffianism of the old Yankee, and the contemporary Nova Scotia skipper; but, for examples of miserable and cowardly ruffianism in the treatment of seamen, I do not think we need look far a-field. Our own naval and mercantile marine annals are only too full of them. In the merchant service, unhappily, the law nearly always sided with the captain. Dana points to this in a supplementary chapter to his well-known sea story. He shows how the shipmaster came forward with a cloud of witnesses to his respectability and humanity; how his owner said he had employed him for so many years; how one neighbour testified to the punctuality with which he attended Divine service when ashore; how another neighbour deposed to his tenderness as a husband and his devotion as a father, and so on; whilst of the poor seamen who brought the action, nothing was known saving that their learning went no further than to qualify them to sign their name by a cross, and that they presented a very rugged and ragged aspect in their rough hair, old jackets, and sea-green boots.

Last century, a midshipman in the East India Company's service, sued his captain for whipping him. He said he had been flogged with a cat-o'-nine tails, and left to lie in irons for two days. The captain pleaded special justification, and Lord Camden dismissed the case, saying that there did not remain the least imputation on the captain's character. This is a typical instance. A man had to kill a sailor before

the law looked at him; and then he needed only to show that if he had not done the seaman to death by flogging, ironing, and starving him, the ship might—he never could prove she would—have gone to the bottom. Some excuse for excessive whipping in olden days might perhaps be found. When the cat-o'-nine-tails commanded the wind flogging was very well. Time was when French mariners believed that nothing more was necessary to obtain a fine breeze than to flog a boy at the mast. Negroes were preferred, possibly because it was deemed they were sent into this world to be thrashed. They turned the boy's or man's back to the quarter whence they wanted the wind to blow, and then beat him. The notion was not peculiar to the French, for I find that the Arab and Barbary corsairs, during the middle ages, flogged their Christian captives when their prayers for a favourable wind proved of no avail.

Many desperately tragical scenes have resulted from the "spread-eagling" of a man at sea ready for the whip, by the crew throwing themselves upon the captain and mates, and freeing the culprit.

The old punishment of stopping a man's grog is pretty nearly as dead as marooning or keel-hauling, simply because it is the rarest thing in the world now to hear of ships in which spirits are served out to the seamen. Formerly it was felt as a hardship that many men would have been glad to exchange for twenty or thirty lashes; because originally the allowance was handsome—half-a-pint a day. Moreover, prior to 1740, the spirits given to the seamen were undiluted. In that year Admiral Vernon started the practice of adding water to the rum, which thereupon obtained the name of grog from the sailors who, so the story goes, took the idea from "Old Grogram," the familiar title of the

Admiral, suggested by the material of the coats in which he went dressed. Mast-heading, as we all know, was the peculiar punishment of midshipmen who did not choose to behave themselves. Sailors would not have been treated so; they were too useful about the deck. To send a lad on to the foretopsail yard for a few hours' airing was to pay the youth's capacity of working a poor compliment. In the merchant service they would have made such culprits slush down the royalmasts, or tar down a royal stay, or chip the ironwork, or polish the brasswork. Thus, like Dickens's moral pockethandkerchiefs, the punishment would have combined professional instruction with the other purpose it was designed to fulfil.

Hanging was very common at sea. They ran a man up to the yardarm for stealing or broaching cargo just as they hanged for robbery ashore. It was the usual penalty for mutiny. I once saw a marine hanged in China for striking his superior officer. The ceremony was not a little impressive, with the thunder of a gun, the breaking of the death-signal from the ball in which it had mounted to the masthead, the swift soaring aloft of the figure of the malefactor, its abrupt drop, and ghastly, pendulous swaying. At home this hanging business went on with stereotyped precision. The prisoner, attended by the provost-marshal with a drawn sword, ascended the gangway, and walked with a firm step to the platform, where he usually acknowledged the justness of the sentence—poor wretch!—then the fatal bow-gun was fired, and he was launched into eternity at the starboard foreyardarm. All the boats of the fleet, manned and armed, came in a procession to the spectacle; and the picture was made uncommonly dismal by a yellow flag at the masthead of the admiral's

ship—the signal for an execution. Those were taut-handed days. Nor was it only Jack who was punished. A man named Hewett, a purser, for obtaining a small stock of meat from the victualling people under false pretences, was sentenced to be imprisoned for two years in Newgate, and during that period to stand in the pillory for one hour, "between the hours of twelve at noon and two in the afternoon, in the public street near Charing Cross, opposite to the gates of the Admiralty." And this so recently as 1802. Think of the pillory in these days as a contribution to the solution of ordnance and other difficulties!

But the truest policy, then as now, occurs in the advice an old naval captain sent to his son in a letter. Speaking of the captain, he wrote: "Let me earnestly recommend it to him, not to show too great an inclination to punish, because he has power; on the contrary, I would have his humanity display itself even in his chastisements. Punishment is of too serious a nature to be wantonly inflicted or made too free with on every slight offence. A gentle reproof often reclaims; besides, to punish with the utmost rigour is brutality, not justice." The good and lion-hearted Saumarez acted on this principle with notable success. Whilst off the Spanish coast the spirit of mutiny showed itself in the squadron he commanded. One of the worst of the mutineers was a ship's carpenter, who had on many occasions proved himself an intrepid and excellent seaman. He was tried for his life. Lord, then Sir James, Saumarez, sent for him, and by appealing to the culprit's feelings, worked so thorough a reformation in him that he became one of the most loyal of his sailors. This same man was afterwards captain of a gun at the Battle of the Nile, and was instrumental after the action in preserving the *Peuple Souverain* from foundering.

Another instance may be found in Admiral Duncan's life. There were symptoms of mutiny on board the *Venerable;* the admiral ordered all hands on deck, and, addressing one of the mutineers, said, "Do you want to take the command of this ship out of my hands?" "Yes," replied the man. Duncan raised his sword, but was prevented from running the man through by his chaplain and secretary. He cried out, "Let those who will stand by me and my officers pass over immediately to the starboard side, that we may know who are our friends." Six of the crew alone remained; they were seized, ironed, and lodged in the gun-room, "from whence," the account goes on, pointing the moral I am aiming at, "they were afterwards liberated one by one, after showing those signs of real penitence which induced the admiral, by well-timed acts of lenity, to endear himself, if possible, still more to a faithful crew." We have learnt the lesson in this age, and are surely not worse off in consequence. We no longer suffer men to be hanged, whipped, pickled, tarred and feathered, marooned, keel-hauled, hoisted and dropped with a few hundred pounds of iron seized to their feet, at the sweet will of the lords paramount of the quarter-deck. The merchant sailor, as well, has found friends and protection in the law. If he be maltreated now it is at the peril of the man who abuses his power.

CALMS AND SEAS.

"The experience," writes Sir Richard Hawkins, "I had in anno 1590, lying with a fleet of her Majesty's ships about the islands of the Azores almost six months, the greatest part of the time we being becalmed; with which the sea became so replenished with several sorts of jellies, and forms of serpents, adders, and snakes, as seemed wonderful; some green, some black, some yellow, some white, some of divers colours, and many of them had life, and some there were a yard and a half and two yards long; which had I not seen I could have hardly believed."

It would be a curious coincidence that Coleridge should have put much such another description as this into the mouth of his Ancient Mariner, if it were not that there is clear evidence of his having been a reader of old Purchas, in which the above sentences may be found, as he himself admits when he tells how the dream of Xanadu and Kubla Khan came into his brain on his falling asleep over the worthy old "Pilgrime's" folio. Be this as it may, the "dead calm" does not pertain, unfortunately, to Elizabethan annals only; though there is good reason to suppose that the marine corpse-lights, the weird burning of the water, the slimy things crawling about upon the viscous sea, offered themselves to the sight of no later generation of nautical men than

that to which Coleridge's lean and yellow salt belonged. I was much struck by a singular example of a spell of unfanned motionless sea given in the form of extracts from the log-book of a Dutch barque named the *Nereus*, whilst on a voyage to Amsterdam from Java. The account ran as follows:—the vessel reached the neighbourhood of the Equator on February 15. At times she would glide along at about half a mile an hour, but during several watches she did not go forward at all, and "then she did not steer." There is a touch of Dutch artlessness in this confession, as though Mynheer the Master should own to a little surprise that a vessel without way on her should not answer her helm. On February 19 it was a dead calm for twenty-four hours. On March 6 a very faint air blew. "From March 16 till April 9, light breeze; the vessel made a mile and a half, a mile, or nothing per watch." From April the 18th to the 22nd the catspaws hung south-west; but there was no weight in them to propel the ship. Then the breeze freshened and came on to blow a gale; yet for two months and one week, or in round numbers for sixty-three days, the good barque *Nereus* of Amsterdam —Seinstra, master—was scarcely more than a painted ship upon a painted ocean.

The Steam Fiend may well triumph when he reads such records as this. There are steamers which occupy but a few more days in making the voyage, out and home, to Australia than the time taken by the *Nereus* to "cut the Line," as the old saying was. Imagination fondly dwells upon the faces and tempers of the Dutch crew as day after day came round "und der vass no vindt." How much whistling was included in those sixty-three days? How many forefingers were wetted and held up? How often was the dog-vane glared at?

The sea-blessings showered upon the wretched catspaws coming along in a little curl of blue shadow, and expiring in their efforts to reach the barque may be conceived. The Dutch are a steady, phlegmatic people of a temper not easily disturbed; but sixty-three days of calm, and the ship homeward bound too, having come all the way from Java, and climbed round the Cape, would go far to vex the soul even of a Van Dunk, who, because he never got drunk, is universally admired as one of the best examples of sound Holland principles.

It has been truly said that there is no sentiment at sea. Passengers feel this as fully as sailors. Once embarked the business is to arrive, and poetry, particularly when its presentments are of a hindering sort, becomes an objection and a nuisance. Otherwise there is no condition or circumstance of a voyage so purely romantic in its colouring and suggestions as the dead calm. By this is meant profound stagnation of the atmosphere; for, as to the sea, it is rare indeed to find the great ocean sleeping without some slight heaving of its mighty bosom. The Equatorial sun shines at noon, in the middle of the brassy heavens, like a fiery eye sending the white beam of its glance sheer to the green ooze, as one might fancy, a thousand fathoms deep. The horizon writhes in the palpitating ardency of the dim blue air; the swell brims in oil to the blistered hot wet sides of the ship, and here and there the black fin of a shark dazzles out to the heave of the dark blue fold. Twenty draughts of air from all quarters fan the steaming decks with the swaying of the lower canvas, and keep the eye impatiently glancing around for the shadow of wind upon the water. Whatever is touched is so hot that if the hand lingers a bit it is brought away scorched. The wheel kicks sullenly in the sulky hold of the helms-

man. Yet there is magnificence inexpressible in this solemn sleep of the ocean under the silent heavens. A shaft of splendour lies beneath the sun, and there is not the faintest finger of air to break with slender furrow the exquisite clearness of the outline of mirrored glory. The white brow of a cloud may tremble for a little while over the confines of the deep; but it dissolves before it can soar, and the dome arches up in several tints of cerulean blue until it brightens into pale gold round about the sun.

It is impossible to observe such effects in a steamer. Progress is incessant, and the vessel raises a small gale for herself to blow along her decks. The Dutchmen, however, saw it all, and they did not find it beautiful. There was nothing even in schnapps to make sixty-three days of calm endurable. Canopied by a hovering heaven of stars, the cool sweetness of the night could not console them. How many new moons were they going to see before Amsterdam hove in view? The crew, doubtless, could think of nothing more in their sudoriferous barque. Venus exhibited her silver beauty in vain; the Southern Cross was, like the sign of the Flying Dutchman, hanging low over the southern horizon; they cared for Ursa Major only, and yearned to see the Pole Star floating high. It is easy to imagine the incredulity with which they listened to the first pipings of the north-easter. The whistling in the rigging would be like ironical imitations of their own efforts to court the breeze. They could have prayed against no worse wind than a gale from the north and east; but after sixty-three days of calm a month's hurricane dead ahead would, we may be sure, have been almost as welcome to them as the sight of the Schreyerstoren.

Seeing that, though there are a great number of

steamers independent of all breezes afloat, there are also very many sailing vessels of all kinds voyaging in every direction, it is much to be regretted that the power possessed by ancient seamen of controlling the wind should in this age be a lost art. The calm is still ofttimes with us; but where is the magician, where the Fin, the image of the patron saint, the numerous devices by which sailors in former ages delivered their ships out of stagnant seas and proceeded on their voyage with a merry gale making music in their shrouds? Father Dominick Navarette in the seventeenth century discovered certain infallible signs of wind. One never failing token "was the running and fluttering about of little insects aboard the ship, and the more restless they are the higher the wind, and by observing what place they come from mariners shall know if it will be fair." Another sign, according to his reverence, is when pigs begin to run and tumble about a ship in a calm. Baumgarten, in his "Travels," says he was with a pilot who, by putting his finger in his mouth, and then holding it up, "prognosticated to us that we should have wind very speedily, which indeed proved accordingly." All that the modern sailor can do by wetting his finger and lifting it is to feel if there be any movement in the air. The digit has long ceased to be a sybil. Formerly the Brittany fishermen raised the wind at will by procuring the dust swept out of a certain church, and blowing it in the direction from which they desired the breeze to come. Sardinian sailors also possessed the same useful art; to procure a fine wind they had nothing to do but to sweep a chapel after mass and blow the dust of it after departing ships. It would be interesting to know if the crew of the Dutch barque practised any of these devices during their long detention upon the Equator?

Did they scratch the foremast with a nail? Had they a Russian Fin among them, and, if so, did they try the experiment of locking him away in the forepeak until he chose to bring about a wind? Ancient mariners, were they living, might hardly deem this generation of sailors reasonable in ridiculing the old plans without trying them. For instance, there is an ancient Dutch notion that if you have long had a contrary wind, and meet a ship bound in the opposite direction, by throwing a broom at her the wind will at once grow fair for you. Possibly the Dutch barque did not meet with any vessel in those sixty-three days on which to try the experiment; but supposing a craft to have come stealing her way from one catspaw to another, surely there would be enough old scrubbing-brushes "knocking about" to render a trial of the Holland custom both cheap and practicable. It is admitted that Van Tromp's broom at the masthead was regarded by his sailors as the instrument that supplied him with fair winds. Be all this as it may, sixty-three days of dead calm, in which long weeks the ship thus paralyzed makes scarcely a dozen miles of progress, is so wearisome an incident of a voyage by canvas that it ought to suggest to mariners of all nations the expediency of "looking up" some of the old treatments for this kind of oceanic distemper. There is no reason in the world why our great-grandfathers' tricks of raising the wind—if ever successful—should be left to lie entombed amongst the lost arts.

Happily, however, for the "tacks-and-sheetsman," it is not always a clock-calm at sea. And it is equally fortunate for the artistic and imaginative mind—when lodged in frames insusceptible of the effect of pitching and rolling—that there should be such things as, to use the language of the land, waves. Appeals have again

and again been made to the officers of the mercantile marine to dedicate their leisure on shipboard to the measuring of the height of waves. It is felt that the merchant captain and mate are seafarers who experience every kind of weather, and navigate all the great oceans, and that they have opportunities, therefore, of collecting data on the subject of waves which are denied to the gentlemen of the navy. On the whole, it must be said that very little is known of the altitude of the surge, and that a considerable extension of knowledge in this direction is demanded in the interest of the shipbuilder as well as the mariner. A scientific gentleman, not very long ago, declared it impossible that the tallest sea could exceed six feet, because, he added, the most furious tempest has not a penetrating power beyond that depth! It will be supposed that he was never off Cape Horn, and that he based his theories on the disturbance during a breezy hour of the surfaces of the Round Pond and the Regent's Canal. Dr. Scoresby pronounced the seas of the Atlantic during heavy weather to run to a height of from forty to forty-five feet. This may well be regarded as a great sea, but it would be interesting to know the elevation of the waves of the South Pacific in high latitudes during a hurricane, since it is certain that for magnitude and velocity the seas of the North Atlantic are not comparable with the stupendous folds which are set running by the storm along the vast stretch of waters which girdles the Southern Hemisphere.

"A thing of beauty is a joy for ever." A wave is a thing of beauty, but it is only a joy to those who watch it marching in splendour and foam from the safe refuge of the shore. It is a very nauseating condition of voyaging. It makes the bones of ships creak as if

they were full of rheumatism. It fills the brain with a sense of chaos, and one moment swings the moaning traveller to the stars, and the next plunges him into an abyss hideous with gloom and the hissing as of millions of snakes. To measure waves in a severe tempest is even more difficult than to mark effects. When the weather rises to such fury as makes the seas colossal enough to render the determination of their height exceedingly important, there is usually too much anxiety, and even distraction, for observation. The weight of the wind is so violent that it is almost impossible to show one's face to it. The ship, whether a sailing vessel or a steamer hove too, plunges so abominably that a man's main concern is to hold on and save himself from being drowned should one of the frothing mountains tumble on board. There may be other reasons why the officers of the mercantile marine have not very zealously devoted their leisure to measuring the height of waves. But more information than may already be found collected is badly wanted, and unquestionably captains and mates would be doing substantial service by neglecting no opportunity to ascertain, by the best means in their power, the true altitude of ocean seas.

From the little blue curling ripple of the catspaw, softly travelling in an expiring sigh over the burnished surface of the calm, to the tall furious dissolving liquid cliffs of the great deep maddened by tempest, is a vast stride, and a hundred pictures lie between. Beauty is so rapidly merged into terror, that it requires the inclusion of several conditions to preserve it. A man may at six o'clock in the evening be admiring a scene from the deck of a ship which an hour later has grown frightful enough to despatch him below to his prayers.

One wants daylight for a storm; the imagination may be kept cool in the presence of the visible, but when the darkness falls and the scene becomes a thunderous shadow of blocks of blackness, scintillant with the dust of the sea fire, fancy quits its posture of admiration and the mind can do little more than wonder whether day will ever break over the ship again. Possibly one of the finest storm spectacles ever witnessed was in the Bay of Bengal. It was midnight. On the port side of the ship, the sky was black with thunder clouds, whose swollen outlines were revealed by the incessant play of lightning. The thunder was shock after shock of explosions. On the starboard side of the ship the full moon would sometimes dart an icy beam through rifts in the black wings of electric vapour. Meanwhile it was blowing a gale of wind, and a high sea was running. The effect of the play of the lightning, and the occasional glance of the brilliant moon upon the dark coils of the seas melting into foam may be imagined. The alternations of light were reduplicated by the flashings of phosphorus, with which the water was charged to an uncommon degree. The picture was magnificently unearthly, and outside the pages of Milton without expression in literature.

But for the true Andean sea one must go down to Cape Horn, perhaps to as far as sixty degrees south. There are sailors who, standing at the wheel of a ship running before these seas, will never willingly look behind them, lest the sight of the oncoming rampart of green water arching towards the taffrail should unnerve them. Standing on a deck twenty feet above the water line you yet look up at the crest of these seas as at the top of a mountain. The gigantic grace, the huge majesty of these liquid Titans cannot be described. It is necessary to be hove to to appreciate their height,

volume, and power; to watch from the low broadside the swelling approach of the mighty mass, with its freckled front and foamless head flickering in bottle green to the dull light of the grey sky; to feel the sweep of the ship up the enormous acclivity, and then whilst, for the space of a breath only, she hangs poised with upright masts and shrieking rigging on the headlong brow, to look down and behold the valley beneath, into which the vessel an instant after slides like a comet. It is difficult to write of the seas which run in heavy weather off the southernmost point of South America without risk of being charged with exaggeration; they must be seen, and a little spell of custom will render admiration easy. It is impossible to be tossed by them in such vessels as now make the passage of the Horn, without wondering by what miracle of luck or phenomenal merit of seamanship the old navigators were enabled to beat against them in their small half-decked boats, some no bigger than a Deal lugger, without a touch of the weatherly qualities of such craft.

There are some curious superstitions concerning waves. It was formerly held amongst certain of the devout that the commotion of the sea was owing to the serpents which St. Patrick had imprisoned in a box when he cast them out of Ireland. The Arab sailors believed that the high seas off the coast of Abyssinia were enchanted, and whenever they found themselves amongst them they recited verses which were supposed to subdue them. An old traveller, in a voyage from Messina to Malta, writes that he saw the captain, an old and experienced sailor, standing at the bow muttering and pointing with his finger. On being asked what he was doing, he replied that he was breaking the force of a fatal wave by making the sign of the cross, and saying the prayers

proper for the occasion. He said that every ninth wave was the dangerous one. The writer adds, "And as the ship was immediately driven more violently, and the water suddenly beat high over it, 'This,' said he, 'is the ninth. Take the number and count on.' Strange enough every ninth wave was much greater than any of the others, and threatened the ship with immediate destruction. This wave, however, whenever it approached, the captain, by his muttering and signing of the cross, seemed to break, and the danger was averted." Tennyson refers to this peculiar surge in the Holy Grail, when he says—

> "Till last a ninth one, gathering half the deep,
> And full of voices, slowly rose and plunged,
> Roaring; and all the wave was in a flame."

Perhaps some modern skipper, whose decks have been swept, and who knows what the meaning of the word "pooped" is, may be induced to take the trouble to hunt up the old formula for allaying the sea in a tempest. A few verses such as the Arab's chant would be a cheaper and much less troublesome application than oil, and if the spell saved the cook's galley and a quarter-boat or two the captain, however modern in his literary tastes, might not consider his inquiries into the black-letter age to have been wholly without purpose. But let it not be supposed that the high wave is the dangerous one. The regular running surges may all be as tall as the biggest hotel in London, with a ninth fellow amongst them as high as the Monument, and yet not prove nearly so dangerous as the pyramidal seas of the cyclone. Of all forms of vexed water the cyclonic agitation is the worst. Here is a whirlwind of astonishing fury so many miles in diameter. For a little while it runs a steady sea, but presently its gyrations bring

up a surge from another quarter; then comes the lull, followed by a frightful outfly of storm from a direction opposite to the point from which the wind last blew. The seas, coming into collision, fight like wolves. They snap and howl, leaping high in conified shapes in the very similitude of sentient passion. The staggering of the ship is indescribable. There is no rhythmic swing to give to her motions something of the vibrations of the pendulum. Her decks are filled with water. Whilst her bows dive into a chasm that has opened under her fore-foot, a valley yawns under her stern, and a hill of water flashes up on either side. It has not been suggested that the altitude of the cyclonic wave should be determined. Probably there is no eye afloat equal to such an undertaking.

Another very uncomfortable sea is the volcanic wave. It is not very long ago that a vessel steaming through quiet waters on a dark night was suddenly hurled up by an invisible billow that was reckoned to be between thirty and forty feet high. Three such waves passed under her, the last being the least in volume, and then all was dead flatness of ocean again. The stoutest heart might well thump to such an encounter as this. To see a wave coming is to be prepared; but to be tossed from the tender delight of a dead level on a dark night into throes as violent as ever hurricane wrought in water, is one of the most alarming of sensations. People fall out of bed, the captain, who is asleep in his chart-house, is tumbled on to the deck, and reckons his ship to have gone ashore in a gale of wind; there are many distracting noises of broken crockery, much panic amongst the cocks and hens and turkeys, loud cries from the passengers' berths, and confused shouts in the forecastle. The slipping into still water again merely

heightens the general bewilderment. Waves of this kind are caused by submarine earthquakes, and it is very fortunate, indeed, both for passengers and sailors, that they are exceedingly rare.

It is not necessary to go to the great oceans for bad seas. The nasty snappish wave of the narrow waters may be too insignificant to be worth measuring, but no more uncomfortable surge runs, as most people know who have crossed the English Channel or the Irish Sea, in what 'longshoremen call dirty weather.

Yet, despite its terrors, the wave remains a thing of beauty. There is nothing so triumphant in life, nothing that rears itself so royally, with its plumed head and resistless advance. In all forms it is glorious, rising in sublimity as it grows. What is there to surpass in that particular quality of magnificence with which old ocean endows its creations the giant comber of the Western American and South African seaboards? There is inexpressible solemnity of grace in its slow approach upon the shore, and in the regal obeisance of its towering head, the plumed gear of which it seems to doff as it bends and breaks into a snowstorm in thunder which finds echoes as of an organ in the caverns and hollows of the cliffs. The height of a breaker of this kind might be easily got, for it is hardly less tall in fine than it is in heavy weather. It is not, however, the altitude of the comber that is wanted, but that of the great mid-ocean seas through which the ships go plunging. Further experiments in this direction are required, and science would certainly be served by their being undertaken.

'LONGSHOREMAN'S YARNS.

I WAS sitting on the beach of a South-country watering place, with a book on my knee and an umbrella over my head. A 'longshoreman stood behind. I had glanced at him, and was on the whole well pleased with his appearance. He was the most nautical 'longshoreman I had ever beheld. He was dressed in a complete suit of pilot cloth, though the thermometer stood at eighty-two degrees in the shade. His hair fell in ringlets down his head, and his black beard was trimmed so as to stand out from under his chin like the tail of a bird. He had very small black eyes, and a face dotted with pock-marks. I had noticed him before, and he had impressed me with the fancy of a mariner who had been cast away on a desert island for a number of years, during which time he had eaten nothing but grass and barnacles, and who, being rescued by a ship, had been made clean and comfortable by the loan of a suit of clothes. I was looking at my book when I heard some one address him. I peeped cautiously under the umbrella, and saw a tall, knock-kneed young man in white flannels and a straw hat, prominent eyes, and an open mouth. The youth asked the 'longshoreman some question about lifeboats, and then he wanted to know what was the difference between a cutter and a brig, and if the 'longshoreman had ever saved a human

life, and, if so, what reward did he get. Questions of this sort were multiplied, and by a peculiar tone in the answers returned by the 'longshoreman I gathered that he was quietly taking stock of his open-mouthed young friend.

"Were you ever in danger?" inquired the young gentleman.

"What sort o' danger?" responded the other. "I was once nigh marrying a woman that turned out to have buried four husbands in eighteen year, but I didn't know it. D'ye mean danger of that kind?"

"Oh no!" said the other, speaking very gravely, "I mean the dangers of the sea. I suppose you have been a sailor?"

"You *may* suppose, sir," exclaimed the 'longshoreman with emphasis. "Why, Gor bless my soul, I went to sea when I wur two year old, and only knocked off four year ago."

"Really! at two years. In what capacity?"

"Why, as a hinfant in the custody o' his mother," said the 'longshoreman.

I could pretty well foresee what was coming. Here was a youth who wanted to be able to go home to tea and tell his mother and sisters, and perhaps his grandmother, that he had been having a talk with one of the most wonderful old sailors that was ever heard of—a seasoned tar, a hardy salt, a real seaman, much more exciting than the sailors you read about in novels? 'Longshoremen are on the look-out for weak-kneed, large-eyed young men of this description, and to the gentleman with the corkscrew-ringlets the young fellow in flannels was what he himself would call a "job."

"Then you have really been in danger at sea?"

"Ay! See that there row o' men in fearnaught

trousers a leaning over th' rail? Werry well. One of 'em is two an' seventy year of age, and ne'er a man amongst 'em but what's seen perils enough to turn a 'pothecary's hair white. Now, I tell yer what you shall do. You shall tarn to and roll up all them men's experiences in one parcel, and I tell ye the least o' what I've suffered would drag the whole bilin' of it up if it were moored thirty fathom deep with an anchor that hadn't bin' lifted eighty year."

"Really!" said the young man.

"Why, see here," cried the 'longshoreman, feigning a sudden excitement, as if memory had been somewhat abruptly touched, "I'll gi' ye one danger, to start with. I was in th' mizen-riggin' of a big ship that was houtward boun' to th' coast of Californie. It was blowing a fresh breeze of wind dead astarn, but the sky was blue as this here is; ay, just as blue. Well, I can't rightly remember the particular job I was on, but I recollect of goin' on with it for some time, when casting my eyes astarn I seed a cloud like a b'loon coming up right in the tail of our wake. It drawed nearer and rearer, and the nearer it drawed of course the bigger it growed. I seed it, as I told ye; but supposin' that the mate seed it tew I says nothing, but went on quietly with my work. It worn't until that there cloud had put the sun out that the mate took notice o' him, and then I seed him a-cockin' of his hye aloft. Presently the cloud was drawed right overhead, and was a regular downright thunder-cloud, coming out the blacker for the sun that shone out all round. When he'd come right on top of us, as it might be, he seemed to stand still, as if taking a surwey o' th' wessel. The mate suddenly sings out, 'By thunder! Perkins, if the lightning-conductor ain't stopped to the foot of the stay! If that there

cloud womits a blast the Lord ha' mercy on our souls.' "

"Extraordinary!" said the knock-kneed young man.

"'Jump, Perkins,' cries the mate, "as if yer mother-in-law was in chase o' ye, and cut the conductor adrift and let the end tow overboard.' I'm the man, sir, as would walk into a lion's den when the hanimals was waracious with waiting fur their raw meat and sit down and think nothin' of it. I'm a cove as 'ud man that there lifeboat if so be as my arms had the strength for to row her, though ne'er another party along the coast woulunteered. But when it came to my having to handle a lightning-conductor with the cloud overhead just quietly waiting for me to touch it to let fly, I hung a moment in th' wind; but the true character of the British tar was too strong for me. 'Hobey horders if yer break owners,' is the old saying. Sailors o' my kind always puts dooty first and death last. I pulled out my sheath-knife, jumped out o' th' mizzen-riggin', and ran across to the main 'royal backstay, down which the conductor was led. I was within two foot of it, when there was sich a blaze that 'twas like a man putting his head into the sun. Down I fell in a faint. When I comes to I finds all the steel o' my knife melted, and my fingers a clutching the bone haft. An' what else d'ye think had happened? The tawgallantm'st and topm'st was split, and the whole mess of it had come down. Besides that there was twenty foot of the rail close to which I was a-standin' smashed sheer overboard. Now, sir, go an' ask any of them men leaning over that there rail if they can match this."

"'Pon my honour, it's extraordinary!" said the young man.

"I'll tell ye a more amazing thing, yet," continued

Perkins. "I was aboard a ship boun' to the North of Chiney. There ain't no part of the world that I 'aven't wisited. One day I was sent aloft to paint the royal-m'st-head from what we calls at sea the hyes of the riggin'. We was a passenger ship, an' there was ladies on the poop, no awnings spread, everything clear to the hye. I was an ordinary seaman in them days, nimble as a monkey, and never met any man as could beat me at the hornpipe. As I was painting away aloft it entered my head that if I was to git upon the truck and stan' upright upon it the ladies would be pleased with the sight, and perhaps take some notice of me fur the rest o' th' woyage. There was a spike fixed top of the truck about the length of your leg, sir. This here spike was intended to carry what they calls a wane, to show how the wind blows; but there was no wane upon it, and the spike stood up naked. Well, no sooner thought on than done. I whips on to the truck, and clippin' hold of the spike stood up waiting to be took notice of. The ship wur rolling and pitching a bit, and the motion, as you may reckon, was pretty strong up atop of the mast. Finding it tidy tiring work, and none of the ladies a-looking, I was for coming down, when, in some way there's no 'splaining of, I wriggled my onmention-ables on to the spike, which held me like a butcher's skewer. I tried hard to get adrift, but there was no releasing of myself. I could have cut away with my knife, but there's no cause to explain to a high-minded young gentleman, as I see you are, the reasons why I didn't. I don't know that ever a mortual mariner was in such a hawful situation afore. It makes me giddy, now that I'm an old man, even to think of it. The spike wouldn't allow me that give and swing of th' leg which I had when I was a-holding of it, and every instant

I expected to slip and find myself hanging by nothin' stronger than my trousers at a height of—well, I dare say ye might call it a hundred and eighty feet."

"Awful!" exclaimed the young gentleman.

"Presently," continued the 'longshoreman, "the chief mate catches sight of me, and sings out, 'Aloft there! What are ye up to a-tomfoolin' on that there truck? Lay down, d'ye hear, or——' an' here he cussed and swore horrible."

"Lay down!" exclaimed the young gentleman. "What could he mean?"

"He meant 'come down'; but 'lay down' 's the proper term fur "come down" at sea. 'I can't lay down, sir,' I bawled, 'I'm hooked, sir. There's the spike of the wane gone clean through me, sir.' Everybody was now looking up, as you may suppose. It was like being in the clouds to me, and I couldn't hear a word that was said, 'cepting when I was yelled at. The captain was sent for, and he 'rived with his speaking-trumpet and shouted, 'Perkins, come down.' I told him I couldn't, and that I'd forfeit all my wages if I was able to come down. Then they took a look at me through a telescope, and afterwards sent the boatswain aloft, who came as high as th' royal yard and viewed me. 'Bo'sun,' says I, 'ye see how it is,' says I. 'I feel already wonderfully queer and sick,' I says, says I; 'and if I'm to be kept a standing up here much longer,' I says, says I, 'without something being done to deliver of me I'm a dead man,' I says, says I. 'Well, Perkins,' he says, says he, 'I'll go below an' tell the capt'n yer condition,' he says, says he, 'and we'll have to tarn to an' see what's to be done fur ye.' Well, to cut this here yarn short, what do you think they had to do at last? Why, strike the mast."

"Strike the mast!" exclaimed the young gentleman, in a voice that showed his mind hopelessly fogged.

"Ay," exclaimed Perkins emphatically, "strike the mast with me atop of it. They had to send the royal and tawgallant yards down, reeve the mast-rope, and lower away until they brought me on to a level with the topm'st head. They had to use the knife after all to get me adrift. I was an hour on that there truck, and if you was a sailor, sir, and could onderstand what it was to stand on the top of a lofty mast, on a circular piece of wood about as big as the crown of a straw 'at, with nothin' to hold on to and nothin' to support ye but a spike through yer onmentionables, and then to have to undergo all the jerks and wibrations of being lowered, you'd agree with me that there ain't nothin' in sea stories as beats the like o' that experience."

"It is too awful, you know, really," exclaimed the youth.

"But arter all," continued Perkins after a short silence, "that there truck job is a mere moskeetee-bite 'longside what happened to me once in a woyage round the world an' back agin. We was an old-fashioned ship and carried what was called single taws'ls."

"Oh, indeed," exclaimed the young gentleman.

"Ay, single taws'ls. It was in the middle watch; I was below, sleeping soundly. Nothin' could ever stop me from sleeping soundly. They say it's a sign of a first-rate seaman. I believe it is myself. All on a sudden I was woke up by a terrible thumping, and as usual was the first on deck. The ship was on her beam ends an' half a gale o' wind a-blowin'. Well, we let go and clewed hup and got her middlin' easy. The watch I was in was told to jump aloft and put two reefs in the foretaws'l, and then furl it. Werry well, I was in th'

bunt and the sail was clewed hup. It was so black that sleep itself ain't blacker. Ye couldn't see an inch, and everything had to be done by feelin'. I was leanin' over the yard to help haul the slack o' th' sail hup when I overbalanced myself and fell. I fell right forrard over the yard, but instead of striking the deck I was caught in th' bight o' th' canvas that the men was furlin', which, by being triced up by the bunt-lines and the likes o' them ropes hung like a hammock under the yard. I sung out at the top o' my woice, but to no purpose. The wind was screeching horrible, and the men not bein' able to see had to yell to each other, and I was a bit muffled up too down there, so that in th' general confugion my woice wasn't heard. Well, what d'ye think was th' end on it. Hang me, sir, if they didn't stow me in th' bunt of that there sail, and make as smooth a job o' me wid their bunt gaskets as if they was goin' into 'arbour. All night long the gale blowed, and all night long I laid in the heart o' that there taws'l."

"How awfully beastly!" exclaimed the young gentleman. "I wonder you weren't smothered."

"Ay, an' so I nearly was. Yet I must ha' made shift to breathe somehow or huther, I suppose. All the blessed while I was a-thinking, when it comes on fine, they'll set this here sail, and when they let's fall the bunt what's to become o' me? I couldn't hear nothen, and felt like being wropped up in my hammock ready for the last toss. Suddenly they loosed the sail, and away I rolled down into the bottom of th' bight o' canwas. I roared out with th' fright an' th' dazzle, for it was broad day, an' the sun ashining, and then, my presence o' mind coming to me, I screeched hout, 'For God's sake, keep fast them buntlines ontil I gits hout o' this.' All hands had supposed me overboard, and the

chaps who 'ad loosed th' taws'l hearin' my woice, but not being able to see me, took me to be Perkins's ghost, and ran down on deck in a terrible funk. If it had depended on them I might ha' lain in that there taws'l ontil th' end o' th' woyage. However, some o' the other chaps comes aloft, an' seein' how it was, they lowers a bowlin' to me, into which I got, and was haul'd hup."

"Extraordinary!" said the young gentleman. "What awfully horrid dangers a man meets with at sea!"

"Why even *that's* nothing," continued Perkins, "compared to one mortal expirience I met with in a woyage from Californie to Chiney, and from Chiney to Chili by way o' New South Wales. I falls from aloft, and when picked up was in a dead swound. They give me two days, then stitched me hup in a hammock and brought me to th' gangway. For some hours I know'd what they was up to, but couldn't speak. But when I felt myself put on the gratin' and that I couldn't be mistook in supposin' th' skipper to be close by, with a prayer book in his hand, I says to myself 'Perkins,' I says, says I, 'you must make a heffort, or it's good night,' I says, says I. An' I did make a heffort. It felt like bustin' hup. The skipper was in th' middle o' th' Orfice when I made that there heffort, and I rolled off th' gratin', and fell with a mighty flump on the deck. I was afterwards told the chap as had held th' gratin' let go, and ran up th' riggin'. Others o' th' crew bolted forrards, and tarned in. The consternation was werry surprisin'. However, the capt'n, callin' for his knife, rips open the hammock, an' out I steps, none th' worse for havin' been dead, and sufferin' from nothin' more than pusperation."

"By George," exclaimed the young man, "how

awfully disgusting it would have been, you know, if you hadn't been able to move!"

"Ay," answered Perkins, "it would. But, taking sea dangers all round, I reckon there's none worse than thirst."

"Thirst must be fearful," said the young gentleman.

"It *is* fearful," responded Perkins. "It's fearful, sir, when ye've been in an open boat, as I have, for three weeks, and havn't had so much as a drop o' dew to cool your burnin' lips. But I'll tell ye when it's fearfuller still—when thirst is fearfullest of all, sir—and that is when a man's dry as I am now, parched, I may say, without the walue of half-a-pint in his pocket, and with several first-class publics hard by."

No more was said. The young gentleman moved off. Perkins followed him. I stood up to see which way they went, and perceived Perkins with the young gentleman at his heels making a direct course for the Three Thirsty Sailors.

Perkins was not to be my only experience that same day. I was not a little amused and interested in the afternoon when, on asking an old boatman with whom I had been conversing for some time to refresh himself at my expense, I stepped with him into a little alehouse close down by the sea, where I found myself in the presence of seven or eight watermen, regaling themselves with beer and tobacco. As a rule, when a number of this kind of men get together, they talk in couples, and the confusion is lively; hoarse and salt arguments being incessantly traversed by shouts and yells to Tom or Jim to confirm the accuracy of a remark, or to furnish a name or a date. The boatmen I found myself amongst, however, were conversing and listening with great propriety, one speaking at a time, whilst the others

thoughtfully smoked or interjected such remarks as, "Why yes, that's true enough," or "There ain't no contradicting that, Tommy," or "Jest my views, as Simon here'll tell ye." It was my part to listen. I lighted a pipe and sat down, whilst my boatman, having taken a chair opposite me and raised his glass with a "Well, here's my respects to ye, sir," and swallowed half the contents, turned to another old boatman who was sitting near him, and exclaimed, "Joe, what was the crowner's findin' consarning that there dead body picked up under the cliff t'other day?"

"Why, I hear that it was agreed he'd come by his death through a swound. That's better than saying he was drunk. But these here accidents ain't calculated to do us men much good. Nothen going on round the coast now but what the papers calls cas'alties. The public 'll end in taking fright, and bortin' will go out o' date altogether."

"It's pretty nigh gone altogether as it is," said a young boatman.

"Whatever accidents happens," exclaimed an old man who was addressed by the others as Tom, "is chiefly caused by the public theirselves. There's a hignorance and a selfishness amongst holiday people, and others as ought to know better, as makes me astonished that hundreds and hundreds ain't drownded every summer. There was a man here t'other day from a port down West. He was tellin' me that a steamer was chartered by some speculative covey to carry people at so much a head each up a river to view the scenery. Well, this here man thought as he'd go and have a bob's worth of sight-seeing, so he steps aboard the steamer, where he finds about a hundred and fifty persons already assembled. Still they was a-comin.' The bell kept all

on a-ringin', and the people a-runnin', till pretty nigh three hundred men, women, and children was aboard that steamer, and then time being long past up, and no more passengers appearin', the vessel steamed off. Well, the man as told me this said that from the paddle-box the decks looked full, and I dare say they did. He thought they was now going straight on up the river; 'stead o' which, on rounding a corner, what should come into view but a pier chock-full o' people, and a crowd behind waiting for room on the pier to shove forward. The steamer drove alongside, and the man told me he never see such a sight as followed. There was drunken soldiers and sailors, men, women with babies in their arms, little children, all thrustin', shovin', shoutin', cryin', and screechin' as they jumped aboard. The people in the steamer wanting to see what was happenin' all ran to one side, of course, and listed her down till she was sponson under. Then there was wot they calls a panic. Some one sung out that the vessel was going down. There was an old barge moored 'longside the pier, and when the people took fright there was a jump for it. My man told me he got in, makin' sure the steamer was foundering. He says after that all he recollects plainly of was the people on the pier being shoved by the people astarn of 'em towards the steamer, and the people on the steamer trying to get on to the pier, and numbers of them jumping into the barge; likewise he recollected the screams of the people, seeing women fainting, chaps leaning over to pull children up out o' the water, drunken soldiers and sailors fighting—the people in charge of the steamer looking on helpless, as if they was drunk too, and imbecile—until at last, he says, the people crowded so fast into the barge that they shoved several persons overboard, he amongst them.

He lay hold of a line that moored the barge to a pile or upright on the river's bank, and hauled hisself ashore, and he says to me that he'd never go sight-seeing again in a steamer, not if he was to be paid £100 down for every excursion. If," said the boatman, "the public chooses to put itself into sich sittivations as this, callin' of 'em pleasure-makin', who's to save them from being massacred? If, with eyes in their heads and with looking they can't see a tremendious danger straight in front of them, why, then, they must be drownded."

"Yes," said another man, "but drownin's bad for bortin'. It don't want many accidents to make a bad season."

"I dun'no," exclaimed a boatman, "whether bye-laws restrainin' people from going out in borts without a man wouldn't be good for us watermen, as diminishing danger, and so rendering borting more comfortable and agreeable. I've known visitors, who might otherwise ha' been good customers, to take fright at merely watchin' of a couple of cockneys out in a sailin' bort. Only the other day I made up my mind that two young chaps 'long with two young gals was bound to go. They kep' the sheet fast, and three of 'em sat to loo'ard trailing of their hands in the water, with the chap a'steering to windward of the helm, sometimes luffing till she was all shaking, and sometimes letting her go through it ramping full. Had the wind freshened instead of failed the bort must ha' capsized as sartin as that there pewter pot would fall to the ground if I shoved it off this 'ere table. Then what would ha' happened?"

"Why," said another man, "bortin' would have been knocked on the head for the rest of the summer."

"Ay," said a gruff fellow; "and take the skylarking that goes on in boats. I've seen a boat loaded down to

her gun'nel with a party of men and women, and ideots a-standing up on the thwarts with their legs wide apart swaying of the boat to make her roll, and all the females screeching with laughter, as if, by the Lord, they was rehearsing for another kind of screeching. And then take one of them chaps who pretends he knows how to row, pullin' away with the tide, and reckonin' that because he sees things passing pretty quick he's made a mistake in not taking to rowing as a purfession. If he's never heard of again 'tain't his fault."

"'Stonishing what a lot of fools there are in this world!" exclaimed my old boatman. "I once see a young wench shoving a perambulator along the quay side, where it slopes. She turns the perambulator towards the water in order to see down upon the deck of a vessel that was hauling in alongside. Wanting to blow her nose, perhaps, she lets go the handle to feel for her handkercher, when away goes the perambulator with the babby in it slop into the water. Since then I've took notice of the number of women as turns their perambulators upon that slope towards the water if they want to look at anything over the quay side. Ten out of every fifteen does it, and if ten out of every fifteen babbies ain't drownded in that place it's because the women forget to let go the handles to feel for their hankerchers."

"Stoopidity!" said an old fellow, in a growling voice, "why, there's no hend to it. Take the case of that gent's son that was a-fishing off the pier. He was sitting with his legs over the side," said he, for the information of those who had not heard the story. "There was other boys and one or two men fishing off that pier likewise. This here gent's son gets a bite, and sings out that he's caught a fish. Hearin' this, t'others come running up to see, crowd about him whilst he's hauling up a dab

'bout as long as yer little finger, and in their excitement elber him clean overboard. Well, he wasn't drownded, but he came very near to it. Had he been drownded," said the old fellow, contemptuously, "there'd been a scare. Fishing 'ud ha' received a knock on the head, and one more of the deversions as people comes to the seaside to enjoy would have suffered for the rest of the season, and been the cause of folks leaving, perhaps, afore their time."

"Ay," exclaimed one of the men, "and look what happens on account of the fools who walk along the beach when the tide's a rising. D'ye remember that chap, Harry, as you and me found lying on the rocks? Harry and me," he continued, "was a-coming along, making haste, for the tide was rising fast, when we see a man lying among the rocks, and the water coming up close to him. He moved, and signed to us to come to him. We found he'd sprained his ankle and broke his right arm by tumbling down. He'd been groping about among the pools for whatever he might come across. He was a middle-aged man, pretty tidily dressed. It was lucky we sighted him. He wur as helpless as the rock he lay on, and the evening was drawing up as well as the tide. He told us he'd been singing out till he lost his voice, and that seemed true enough, for he could scarcely speak. If that chap had ended in becoming a corpse—as he wur bound to it if we hadn't come across him—there'd ha' been a fresh start for the wisitors. 'Dear me!' they would have said, 'what a place that is for drowning, to be sure! 'Taint safe even to think of. Better try Ramsgate or Dover next time.'"

"Dunno about Ramsgate," exclaimed one of the men; "there's a good many accidents happens that way, I believe. There's a talk, I'm told, of putting up

a sort of steps or stages there for people to take refuge upon when they're caught by the tide. The idea ain't bad; but what sort of steps 'll they be, I wonder? Timber? They'll have to be pretty solid, I reckon, if they arn't to be washed away. Better to cut steps in the clift, I should say, with an iron handrail solidly let in, and a big holler, with a seat or two, high enough out of any water as might dash up."

"I know them clifts," said my old boatman; "there's not much confidence to be put in steps cut out of chalk. Chalk crumbles, matey. Why look at the litter that lies all along them sands. It takes more than a lump of chalk to skeer me, but I've walked a many times 'twixt Ramsgate and Broadstairs, and never felt comfortable unless I'd a good hundred foot 'tween me and the clifts. Why, I was once passing along when I see a block of chalk pretty nigh the size of old Tom's cottage come thundering down. 'Twere like an airthquake, and made ye think of the country going to pieces. Well, not fifty yards furder on I see a couple o' spooneys sittin' with their arms round each other's waist, a making love, at the bottom of the clifts, with just such another rock as had tumbled down standing out right over them. They must ha' heard the shindy the chalk made when it fell, but d'ye think they took any notice? Not a hatom. And when I sings out and points to the lump over their heads and to the heaps of stuff all about 'em, the young chap he cries out, 'Git along, you old fool, and mind your own business.'"

"Ay," exclaimed a strapping young boatman, "that's their way. A gent once came running up to me out of breath. 'Hi!' he says, 'there's two young fellars,' he says, says he, 'as are rowing theirselves pretty nigh clean out o' sight with the tide. I don't know 'em,' he

says, 'but I've been a watching of them, and I'm sartain,' he says, says he, 'that if help ain't sent to 'em there'll be an accident.' Well, I nat'rally supposed that they'd be glad of some one to help 'em to get back, and I wanted a shilling bad, for I hadn't airned a farden that week. Well, I jumps into my boat, and pulls away arter them, and by-'em-by, picks them up, they having got their boat's head round. They cheeked me at first; said if it came to a matter o' rowing they dared say that they'd had more jobs of that kind than I should have the ordacity to dream of, and they talked to me in that fashion. However, I put up with their imperence, being wishful to airn a shilling, and arter a bit they let me get into their boat, and, with my own in tow, we started, they relieving each other, and me tugging away all the time. Well, we got home. The two chaps paid the man as the wherry belonged to, and was walking off when I followed 'em and asked them to remember of me, seeing as it had been a pretty stiff job. 'Why,' says they, 'we never asked you to come. You wolunteered. What d'ye take us to be? The exercise 'll do ye good. You look as if some of that there fat wanted pusspiring out of ye,' and with that they walks off laughing at the top of their woices."

"Your speaking," said a little fellow who had been looking anxiously for an opportunity to say a word, "of the covey ye found with his arm broke and his foot sprained, reminds me of an hincident that I confess rather gave me a turn at the time. There was some children with their clothes tucked up and their legs bare, paddling about in the water. My boat lay off, and I was trying to get custom. Presently the fattest old woman as ever I see in all my life, passed me with her petticuts held up and her feet exposed. I niver see sich a figger. She'd got a red welvet hat on, and I reckon

that if instead of going into the sea, she'd ha' been coming out of it, there'd ha' been a regular skeedaddle. Well, this here fat woman goes into the water just like a ball being blowed along without rewolving. She steps in till the water comes three or four inches above her ankles, when all of a sudden she falls flat down upon her face, and there she lay, with nothen showing but the round of her back. Guessing something wrong, I dashed in arter her, and got her head up out of it, but it took four men to carry her on to the sands. A doctor come and said it was happleplexy, or something bearing that name. It's some time ago now," said the man, "but I tell ye, mates, if I see that there woman's face when I turns in of a night it's a sign there ain't to be much sleep for me, and I generally has to see the doctor."

"Harry," shouted a fellow across one of the tables to a tall, melancholy-faced boatman, "d'ye remember the case of the *Skylark* as that ingeneer chap off the tug was telling us about?"

"Remember?" said the tall man, "why, yes, of course I remember. I dunno," he continued, addressing the others generally, and taking the story out of his mate's mouth, "as ever I heerd of a closer shave. You know the Something Bank," said he, referring to a shoal the name of which I cannot recall. "Well, a party of four men and three women hired a boat for an hour's sail. They wouldn't take a man with them, as they said they knowed all about handling a sailing-boat, and was too old to stand in need of teaching. The bank was dry, but the tide was rising; the water was middling smooth, and a nice breeze a-blowing. They said it would be a good lark to sail for that there bank, get ashore, and play kiss-in-the-ring. It 'u'd be something

to talk about, they thought, playing kiss-in-the-ring on a place where there'd been plenty of shipwrecks. So," said the long boatman, rendering his story impressive by his hoarse utterance and deliberate manner, "they heads for this bank and they fetches it. Well, they downed lug, letting the boat lie with her stem on the sand, and they all got out, supposing in their ignorance that the boat 'ud lie all right. They was springing and larking about, kissing and squealing and the likes of that, when presently their boat goes adrift, and as they hadn't let the yard of the sail come well down, there was just a little bit o' canvas showing, enough to let the wind help the tide with her nicely. The hexcursionists on seeing this felt, I dare say, as if it was time to give up kissing, and more reasonable to go to prayers. What their feelings was, mates, you may imagine. For by this time they could see that the bank was growing smaller, which properly led 'em to suppose that the tide was making fast. Most luckily for them, there was a tug coming along, meaning to give this here bank a wide berth; but keeping a bright look-out, as they generally does aboard them wessels, they sighted the boat all adrift, and on their shifting their hellum for her they drawed close enough to the bank to see figgers upon it. So they took the boat in tow, and went away for the bank. But by this time the water was over the parties' feet, and it didn't need to rise much higher, with the tide that was a-running, to wash them all away. There was a scramble to get them; and a job it was, the ingeneer he told us. But they was got off at last, pretty near in a dying condition, and brought ashore."

This seemed to end the boatmen's experiences, or at least their conversation upon this particular topic. I rose and quitted the room.

THE BRITISH SAILOR.

On February 9, 1847, Mr. John Lewis Ricardo brought forward the following motion in the House of Commons:—"That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the operation and policy of the Navigation Laws." Mr. Thomas Milner Gibson, then Vice-President of the Board of Trade, gave the sanction of the Government to the motion, and recommended that the committee should be appointed. The proposal was strongly objected to by the Hon. H. T. Liddell (afterwards Earl of Ravensworth), who, in the course of his speech, declared that the object of the navigation laws was twofold—first, to create and maintain the great commercial marine of this country for the purposes of national defence, by which he directly indicated supplies of men; and, secondly, to prevent any one other nation from engrossing too large a portion of the navigation of the world. Mr. Ricardo's motion was carried by 155 to 61. This was the beginning of a long and bitter struggle.

The whole body of merchants and shipowners, with but few exceptions, were in opposition to the repeal party. One of their strong arguments was that the threatened legislation would practically annihilate the British seaman by the expurgation of the Apprenticeship Clause, and by forcing the owner, for reasons of economy, to ship as few sailors as the vessel could

possibly go to sea with, and to choose for such hands the cheapest labour procurable. This opinion was supported by many persons of weight and authority. Admiral Martin, for instance, declared that the merchant service was everything to the navy, and that the navy could not exist without it. He quoted June 1, 1794, and declared that Howe could not have gained his victory but for the merchant seamen of this country. He pointed out that the resources of the mercantile marine enabled Admiral Gardner to swiftly collect forty thousand seamen and proceed with seven sail of the line and other vessels to the West Indies. He also instanced the case of Lord Hood, and that admiral's occupation of Toulon and seizure of Corsica. It is notorious, indeed, that the opponents of the repeal lay most stress upon the injury that abrogation would inflict upon the British forecastle. London sent a petition of 74,000 signatures, Liverpool another of 24,700. In these documents the invitation to foreign nations to participate in whatever advantages we possess seems to be considered as an evil light in comparison with the consequences the measure would produce in the supply of seamen to the Royal Navy. A letter written by Sir John Gladstone, Bart., to his son, the Right Hon. W. Ewart Gladstone, M.P. "for the University of Oxford," is still extant; and the writer, dictating from a bed of sickness, implores his "dear son William" to consider "where will be your boasted nursery that has hitherto manned your navy and protected your shores," and "what is to become of your justly boasted wooden walls," if the navigation laws are repealed and a gap made in our legislative barricadoes big enough to let in the foreigner? Mr. H. Drummond went further yet: "There was a time when they had a national faith;

there was a time when they venerated, worshipped even, the statesman who guided safely the destinies of the country; when they reverenced the magistrates who presided over the administration of their laws; when they gloried in the soldiers and the sailors who maintained the greatness of their nation throughout the world; when the noblest *credo* that they had was 'Rule, Britannia!' and when the finest anthem in their ritual was 'God save the Queen!'" By which he meant, repeal the navigation laws and the country is doomed. But the most ardent eloquence and signatures in prodigious array availed nothing. At the third reading of the famous bill, in April, 1849, the repealers had a majority of 61. Two months later it passed the House of Lords, and on June 26 the royal assent was given.

The full story of this bill offers some instructive reading at the present time. Nearly forty years have elapsed since the navigation laws fell into dust. Yet in one particular the controversy which Mr. Ricardo's motion set raging through the length and breadth of the land may be said to be as hot now as it was then. The dreadful misgivings of the shipowners have not, indeed, been verified. It is not necessary to go the round of the docks and outports to know that free trade has not extinguished the British mercantile marine. But it certainly does appear as if the prophesyings regarding the decadence of the English sailor were not without a certain accuracy. It is not that Jack has been killed by the repeal of those clauses which were designed to foster and multiply him under the old Acts; he is apparently no longer wanted. Forty years ago the British shipowner was saying, "If you pass your bill, you will oblige us to ship small crews, and since foreign labour is cheaper than native, we will gather

into our forecastles the most inexpensive nationalities we can lay our hands on—Norwegians, Danes, Germans, Greeks; men to be fed at the minimum cost, to whom old bread and young weevils will be as relishable as fresh tack and sweet butter to the English seaman." It would be mere affectation and sheer disingenuousness to pretend that much of what was then predicted has not since been fulfilled. For months and months the cry of the British mariner has been waxing louder and deeper. Scores of meetings have been held, resolutions passed, memorials drawn up, deputations told off, promises made and broken. Numerous Jacks have been locked up for beating the "Dutchman" away from the English shipping offices with horny fists. It came at last to a Royal Commission on Merchant Shipping—as clear an echo of the prophetic shout of 1847 as ever rung out of antecedent through the pages of history. Arguments as to whether the English or the foreign sailor was the better man have risen to so great a height, have been so acidulated with temper, that no person but slenderly interested in the subject could imagine to what lengths the controversialists have gone. And how do we stand now? The smoke of the battle having cleared off a bit, in what posture do we find our nautical countrymen? Are they getting ships, or are their lives still a long and hopeless "loafing job" about the yards? Is the foreigner as much in favour as ever? Have the patriotic instincts of the owner been reached, and does he head the folios of his ledger with "Rule, Britannia" and "Hearts of Oak?"

But what concerns me here is to compare the echo with the cry of which it is the reverberation. What were they saying of Englishmen and foreigners in 1847-49, and what are they saying now? I have

before me two summaries: First, the evidence given before the Commons' Committee forty years ago; and, secondly, the evidence before the Royal Commission of Merchant Shipping, the first part of whose labours has been but recently concluded.* A few extracts from these summaries cannot fail to be of interest at the present moment to the great body of our English seafarers.

It is necessary to premise that the terms of the navigation laws required that British ships should carry a certain number of British seamen, according to the tonnage, if foreign seamen were included in the crew. Supposing a British ship to carry foreign seamen as well as British seamen, she would then have to take one British seaman, for every twenty tons. As an instance of the fostering tendency of the old laws, a Lascar-manned vessel on her return to India was forced to carry out four British seamen for every hundred tons, presuming she took back her Lascar crew. The consequence was that a vessel of 500 tons, say, had to take out twenty British seamen as far as the Cape of Good Hope, because it seems that directly the ship got to the eastward of the Cape her captain was at liberty to work her solely by Lascars. The effect, then, of the navigation laws, or at least those portions of them which especially referred to seamen and apprentices, was to oblige owners to convert their forecastles into nurseries for the production and development of the British merchant sailor. When, therefore, it came to the shipowners having for their own protection, as they believed, to point to the disastrous results which they foreboded as an inevitable issue of repeal, they insisted with great vehemence and large importation of testimony upon the uncommon

* 1887.

merit of the British sailor as he then was. For instance, Mr. George Frederick Young, a well-known shipowner and shipbuilder of London, declared to the committee that he was perfectly certain that British shipping to any considerable extent could never yield a full supply of whole crews of foreign sailors, and that it would never be practicable to bring down a single British seaman to the low level of many foreign nations. This anticipation finds remarkable confirmation in the attitude of the sailor forty years later. Mr. Thomas Boyes Simey, Lloyd's surveyor at Sunderland, supplied some interesting statistics with respect to the difference from the standpoint of economy between Englishmen and foreigners. He mentioned a Prussian barque of 304 tons register, navigated with twelve men, and an English brig of 338 tons, navigated with ten men and two boys. The captain of the Prussian barque received £3 10*s.* a month with perquisites, the chief mate £3 10*s.*, second mate £1 10*s.*, carpenter £2, cook £1 10*s.*, and seven seamen at £1 4*s.* each, making a total of £16 18*s.* a month, exclusive of the captain's wages. In the English brig, the captain received £10 10*s.* a month, mate £5, carpenter £4 10*s.*, second mate £3, cook £3, five seamen at £2 15*s.* each, and two boys at 15*s.* each—amounting to £30 15*s.* as against £16 13*s.* These figures clearly showed the policy the shipowners would adopt if all restrictions upon the employment of foreign labour were removed. Mr. William John Hall, a merchant of London, stated that a British ship, well manned and properly worked, can compete with any ship on the face of the world in point of expense, because the seamen are a better class of men, and have more work in them than the seamen of any other country. Mr. Money Wigram declared that he had no difficulty in procuring trustworthy men as

captains, and having liberally praised the English mariner as a sailor, he added that it would be impossible to man ships with part Englishmen and part foreigners at different wages and different manners of feeding, because it would soon fall into the better class of feeding being given to all. Experience has proved the exact contrary; that is to say, the admixture of Englishmen and foreigners has resulted in the Englishman having been practically dismissed from the forecastle for the economical reasons which have resulted in low wages and low-class feeding.

Mr. J. P. Younghusband, of a firm of Liverpool shipowners, said, "I do not believe that the masters of foreign vessels are better educated and more skilled navigators than the masters of British ships. The best ships and the best masters in the world are to be found in the British service." Mr. John Alexander Hankey warmly supported the merits and character of masters and men, spoke highly of the respectability of the former, and declared they had improved in education. Mr. Charles Enderby, of the well-known whaling firm, found the British seamen in the fisheries quite as good as the Americans, and deprecated the threat of displacing British crews by foreigners. Mr. Mark Whitwell said that he had sailed with men of all nations, but that, taking them for all in all, the British seaman surpassed the whole of them in every respect. "In a bad night," said Mr. William Richmond, "I should prefer English seamen." This was the tenor of most of the evidence, many of the witnesses being the first shipowners in the country—such as Money Wigram, Duncan Dunbar, Mark Whitwell, and the like. In addition to these names a number of naval officers—such as Admiral Martin, Captain Sir James Stirling, Rear-Admiral Sir Thomas

J. Cochrane, and others, testified to the worth of the British merchant sailor in language worthy of the high-hearted candour of those days of fighting sailors.

We are told to believe, however, that since those times the English mariner has so degenerated that owners can no longer endure to employ him. Ships are sailed on the temperance principle, and yet we are asked to believe that he drinks out and away harder than they did in an age when the hold was full of rum puncheons. We are assured that he cannot keep a look-out, that he skulks during occasions of peril, that the serving-mallet and the marlinespike are lost arts to him. And yet in the evidence given before the recent Royal Commission the general testimony is distinctly in his favour. Mr. David Brown merely echoes the old anti-repeal cry. There is deterioration, but why? Because, he says, there is no nursery for educating apprentices. Mr. William Andrew, a ship-captain, declared that could we have all British seamen in our ships, loss of life at sea would be very much reduced. You always find, he says, that the British seaman goes about his work with a deliberate coolness which is not to be found in any other nation under the sun. The secretary of the British and Foreign Sailors' Society affirms that there is no ground whatever for the statement that there is deterioration in the quality of the British seaman. Mr. George Lidgett, of the firm of John Lidgett and Sons, said there is no difficulty in getting seamen, but that there is a difficulty in always getting a sufficient number of British sailors, and he liked British sailors best. Mr. J. H. Worthington, chairman of the Shipowners' Associations at Liverpool, said that, as to British seamen, the genuine article is becoming very scarce; "when you get him he is as as good as ever." But he omitted to point out that the

reason why the English sailor has become scarce is because he is left unemployed, and that the fostering which should be given to him is devoted to the foreigner. Some encouragement, said Mr. James Henry Beasley—who represents the Liverpool Steamship Owners' Association—should be given to shipowners to carry apprentices. "If that is not done," he adds, "I do not see where our future supply of sailors is to come from." Space prohibits me from referring to other witnesses, but enough has been quoted to show that the approval of the British sailor won from shipowners and others during the agitation caused by a repeal that was deemed a menace to the whole fabric of our maritime interests he still continues to extort, after a lapse of forty years, and at a time when the policy of economy has dictated the most ungenerous statements as regards his principles and capacity as a man. It is impossible, then, I think, to refer to the literature of the abrogation of the year 1849, and to consider the existing condition of the English mariner, without perceiving that if the decay which everybody laments of the British sailor is to be arrested, it can only be achieved by recurrence to the spirit of that especial portion of the old laws which provides that our seamen should be cherished and their interests promoted as part and parcel of the policy of a nation whose supremacy at sea must never be threatened or weakened.

LIFEBOATS AND THEIR CREWS.

Not very long ago there was printed a letter that probably very few landsmen read without pain and wonder. The writer, referring to a heavy gale of wind that had recently swept the British coasts, said that on the evening of the storm a large number of vessels dragged or parted from their anchors in the Yarmouth Roads, and were stranded within speaking distance of the town of Lowestoft, and that, though there are four lifeboats belonging to this district, as well as a couple of powerful tugs owned by the Great Eastern Railway Company, no effort for a long while was made to save the unhappy drowning seamen who were burning lights and "imploring help in the most piteous terms." At last, the writer says, it came to flesh and blood being able to stand the horrible scene no longer; with great difficulty a few determined men managed to collect a crew, one of the lifeboats was launched, and seventeen men saved, "but not before the sea had done its work in many instances, and valuable lives had met a fate which could easily have been averted had proper lifeboat help been afforded in time."

It does not need much imagination to picture the scene, though to do full justice to it one should know those waters, and have stood, during a heavy gale of wind, on any point of the shore betwixt Lowestoft and

East Caistor, and looked forth upon the ocean roaring and hissing upon the numerous deadly sands which stretch from the south and west of Wakefield Gatway to Scroby Sand and the Winterton Overfalls. No more dreadful sight could be imagined than all those small coasting craft stranded, many of them within musket-shot of the piers and esplanades, their hulls barely visible in the evening shadow among the white smoke of the bursting surges, the gale bringing up the rending and tearing noise of splintering wood, mingled with the shrieks of drowning men, whilst close to them, within a stone's throw, as one might say, was the safety of the shore, the lights of rows of gay shops, and multitudes watching in security the fearful picture of riven ships and flashing thunderous surf.

Why were the lifeboats not manned? What had become on a sudden of those noble sailorly instincts which have made the lifeboat corps the grandest service in its way the world has ever seen—a theatre of such exalted heroism and touching unselfishness as nothing in the annals of the sea can surpass? It seemed an incredible thing that some dozens of vessels should be going to pieces off such a town as Lowestoft, filled as it is with plucky and seasoned fishermen and boatmen, within sight or reach of four lifeboats, and dense crowds of spectators, and never an effort made for hours to save the poor fellows who were filling the gale with their heart-rending cries for help. There must be some reason for such conduct—some cause having no reference to the danger of the errand, and therefore, perhaps, remediable. It might be difficult, I felt, to get at the truth by going to Lowestoft and making inquiries; but some light, I thought, would be thrown on the subject by conversation with men experienced in lifeboat work—

men who had rescued shipwrecked people under all conditions of peril and suffering and weather; and so, a day or two after I had read the letter about the Lowestoft boats, I found myself in company with one of the best known of our English coxswains and four boatmen, all of whom had been out on errands of mercy so often that they assured me the jobs were past counting, and that they couldn't tell me how many times if I was to give them twenty pounds a man.

I had seen enough of their work at different times and at various places to gauge to the very heart of it all the meaning of their hard, salt, sea-beaten faces. There is a no more thrilling memory than that of the black night roaring with the sweeping thunder of the gale, the rocket faintly glimmering an instant in the black hollow over the pallid ocean, the height and volume of whose liquid acclivities are made appreciable to the ear by the deep-toned sounds that come rolling out of the lashed surface, the tremulous flicker of a flare two leagues distant, denoting the spot of the shipwreck, the rush of brave hearts into the lifeboat, and her speedy evanishment in the howling gloom as she speeds away, a very messenger from heaven, on her lonely, glorious, devoted voyage.

"Now, boys," said I, "I want you to talk out to me. Don't be nervous. No names will appear in print. Hear this first;" and I read to them the letter that was published in the newspapers. A profound silence followed my delivery; the coxswain took a long pull at his tankard and looked at the others. "Why didn't the Lowestoft men go off to those vessels?" I asked. "Do you think they were afraid?"

"No, I won't say that," replied the coxswain. "I know Lowestoft; I know the class of men they've got

there. I won't say they was afraid—God forbid! eh, Bill?"

Bill shook his head.

"What, then, was the reason?"

"I should say," replied the coxswain, thoughtfully, "that the men when consarned in some previous job hadn't been rewarded up to their expectations. I'll allow there was dissatisfaction."

"Dissatisfaction'll account for a good deal," said another man, whom I will call Joe.

"What is the pay?" I asked.

"Ten shillings a day for sarvice in daylight," replied the coxswain, "and a pound for night-work."

"Is that the regular pay?"

"The regular pay."

"Would you get the same money for going out on a fine warm night as in a freezing gale of wind in January?"

"Just the same. The Institution has the power of increasing the reward by doubling it. But the sarvice must be a very meritorious one for to bring men two pound a piece for the night-work; and if ye bar a medal or a piece of wellum, and the likes of that, now and again, it's seldom that more than two pound for the most meritorious job is given for nightwork, or a pound for day-work, by the Institution. Sometimes the public subscribes, but very seldom—very seldom."

"And you think, then," said I, "that the Lowestoft men refused to go out because they considered the reward of a pound not sufficiently large to induce them to imperil their lives?"

"I don't say it was that," responded the coxswain; "ye ask for a reason, and I give a likely one; but I'm not going to say it's right. But put yourself in the

position of one of us men, sir. You're turned in at home all snug and comfortable. Suddenly you're awakened by a thundering rap on the door, and some one sings out that there is a ship ashore or in danger. You bundle on your breeches and do the rest of your dressing as you run along. It's blowing a whole gale, the cold fit to cut your head off, a raging sea in front of you. You've got a wife and children at home, and they're dependent on you. Would it be fair to call you a coward if you should stand a bit and think that though to be sure you might airn two pounds, the chances are you'd only get one, that is, if you come back alive; and that before you can airn that pound you've got to take your chance of being froze to death or being washed overboard and drowned? A man's life's dear to him. It's all very fine for gents to turn to and write to the newspapers; but if the individual as wrote that letter found the sight too much for flesh and blood, why didn't he volunteer to make one to go off to the coasters?"

"No doubt there has been a great deal of nonsense written about the lifeboat cause," said I. "The sentiment should be kept up, but not at the expense of truth and common sense. If you save lives do you get extra pay?"

"No," responded one of the men who had not yet spoken; "that's the worst-managed part of it, I consider. You may go out and bring in half a dozen men, but unless the honorary secretary chooses to call the service a meritorious one, you'll only get a ten shillings or a pound, according whether it is day or night, just the same as if you'd saved no lives."

"So that in reality you receive no more for actually saving life than for going out with the desire to save it?"

"Not as a rule," was the reply. "As you've heard,

the Institution sometimes doubles the ordinary pay, but only in cases where £500 a man wouldn't be thought too much by any one who knew what sufferings the lifeboatmen had gone through."

"Do you make anything by salvage?"

"Now and again, sir. There's more to be airned by saving goods than lives. Take a case: There were two vessels in distress, a brig and a schooner. The Deal men refused to launch their boat; the weather was too much even for them, the finest boatmen in the world. They looked at the sea and shook their heads; they had wives and children to feed, and a pound was not enough to induce them to face the water. A boat belonging to a neighbouring station was launched and succeeded in getting the men out of the schooner's rigging and bringing them ashore. They then went to the brig and brought her into port. For saving the crew the men got two pounds a man, for saving the brig seven pounds a man."

"You think, then," said I, "that the lifeboat crews are not sufficiently well paid for the work they do?"

"I'm afraid," answered the coxswain, "if the truth's to be told, that's the feeling among a large number of the men who man the boats. Whenever there's any hanging back I'll allow it'll be found that the men don't see their way to risk drowning for the 'lowance the Institution makes. No man 'ud like to own this; the feeling is that lifeboat work's a duty that ought to have nothing to do with payments. But they can't help their human natur', sir; they can't help coming to a stand sometimes and hesitating afore volunteering to make widows of their wives and orphans of their children, in trying to save people who may be drownded afore they're reached, or who are eight or ten miles off and can't be seen and

sympathized with, if ye can understand one, sir. Likewise they feel that they're the sarvice, and that without them there'd be no Institution, and no tidy annual hincomes for them as never go out in the boats."

"And if they was to go out in the boats," said Joe, "ye'd not find 'em writing letters to the newspapers saying that the Lowestoft men ought to be punished for refusing to do their duty. Duty! that's not the word. Why should it be one man's duty to save life more than another's? Why should e'er a one of the Lowestoft crowd as watched the coasters think it the duty of the boatmen more than his own duty to risk their life in that sea? Volunteering's the word; and there's nothing more ridiculous and aggravating than to hear people calling out for punishment on men who refused, once in their whole lives maybe, to do what the people who are singing out would ne'er dream of wenturing for a thousand pounds a man. Ye can't imagine what it is to sit a night in a lifeboat in a heavy sea, and blowing a gale of wind full of frost. Think of a dozen men in a boat forty feet long, ten foot of which is took off by her end-boxes, the sea rushing over them, wet through to the skin, unable to move, sitting in freezing water for eight or ten hours at a stretch. Don't talk of punishing a man for thinking of his home and shaking his head when he looks out into the blackness. We belong to the working classes; we have to get a living; we value our lives like other folks; we're rarely backwards in trying to save men when the call's made. But don't let shore-going people write too much about our noble characters and our glorious errands. We are boatmen; we're to be tempted to do good like others who reckon themselves our betters; and I say that if ever there's any hanging back, it's because the feeling is that not enough of the

money that's given by the public finds its way into the pockets of the men who do all the work."

This did not end our conversation; for in answer to my question whether those whom the lifeboat crews saved ever paid or rewarded the men in any way for their splendid devotion and courage, they gave me several instances of extraordinary ingratitude — one amongst them being the owner of a yacht of sixty tons that drifted ashore; the lifeboat went out, took off the yacht's people —nine persons in all, and next morning not a vestige was to be seen of the vessel. For this service the boatmen received from the man who was rich enough to keep a sixty-ton yacht a cheque for £10 !—being somewhat less than 10*s*. a man, counting the crew of a tug among the participators. "He knew what his life was worth," said the coxswain sarcastically, "and paid accordingly." *

But though our conversation did not then end, all had been said that I find it necessary to repeat. I could not doubt, from what these boatmen stated, that their dissatisfaction with the rewards given them for their perilous undertakings is more prevalent among the crews around our coast than is suspected, possibly by even the Lifeboat Institution itself. The money subscribed by the public is meant for the men who man the boats, who brave the bitter gales, and who have been instrumental in saving seven-eighths of the hundreds of human beings who, according to the Institution's reports, are rescued every year. If I send £5 to this charity, I am quite content that £2 of it should go to the maintenance of the boats, but I am not satisfied if I hear that £1 only has gone to the poor fellows who have been

* Shortly after this was published, the gentleman referred to presented the Lifeboat Institution with £800. But I do not know that his rescuers got more than the sum above stated.

risking their lives all night, and the rest to officials who, if you cannot expect them to be philanthropic for nothing, might at least be satisfied with an income equal to ten times the pay of a coxswain. I have written about the lifeboats before. I know the work, the hardships, the deadly perils of the service, and I say it will not do for us landsmen, toasting ourselves before large fires, with a good roof over our heads, to sit in judgment upon men who hesitate to launch themselves into the white and furious sea for the sum of ten shillings or a pound. Their pay ought to be increased; but I should not advocate large rewards if I did not know that they could be made.

WEEVIL'S LECTURE.

A FEW days ago I received the following letter from my old friend Captain Weevil:—"I have been asked by Captain Martin Gale, who keeps a nautical academy for young gents, to give them a lecture on practical seamanship. Perhaps you would like to hear me. If so be you should come, please to recollect that a ship's forecastle isn't a Oxford University." He gave me the address, and signed his letter, "Yours, without language."

I had met Captain Gale, but did not know that he taught navigation to youths. There might be something to amuse and to interest me in old Weevil's lecture, I thought, so I made up my mind to attend it. Gale's house was not a very spacious one; he had located himself in Bayswater, where, perhaps, he stood a better chance of finding pupils in young gentlemen intended for the merchant service than had he lived in the East-end. On the other hand, Weevil lives at Poplar, so, as will be seen, he had a long distance to travel to oblige his friend. He arrived in a suit of shiny black cloth, and stiff high shirt-collar, in which his jolly round face and bald head rested like an egg in a cup. There were eleven pupils present, averaging in years from thirteen to eighteen. Old Martin Gale, a small, spare man, with a head lightly covered with straw-coloured hair which

time had left unchanged, and a mouth with a singular twist in it that brought it, as he used to say, well up into his port cheek, had arranged for the lecture by rigging up a desk with a small union-jack over it. Weevil stood at this desk, Gale sat alongside of him, and the audience, that numbered three or four others besides the pupils and myself, sat in chairs facing the two skippers.

When all was ready, old Gale got up and made out a sort of preface full of coughs and awkward flourishings of the hand. It was difficult to gather what he wanted to say, but happily his introductory observations were of no consequence. He sat down, and Captain Weevil stood up. The old fellow, with a smiling face, took stock of us with a long overhauling look. He did not exhibit that nervousness which I might have expected to find in a man so sensible as he was of his deficiency in language. Drawing out an immense red pocket handkerchief with white spots, he polished his head, wiped his mouth, and began as follows:—

"My lads—You're all a-going to sea, I hear, and very glad I am to know it, for you look a tidy lot of youths, and never was there such a time as now when the marchant sarvice wanted good men. I suppose none of you exactly know what you're going to, and it's best you shouldn't. The sea's a manly life, and several joys attend it, such as the pleasure of getting home, the runs ashore, and the sights seen in foreign ports, and the likes of such things as that. But it's a rough life too; there's a deal of wet and sleeplessness in it, there's money to be airned, but little to be saved, and when at sea there's such a call upon the attention of a right-minded man as no other profession can equal in severity."

"Hear! hear!" said old Gale.

"Only consider, young gents, what the feelings of a captain who's got principles and a correct understanding, what the feelings of such a man must be when he walks the quarter-deck of his ship, and reflects upon his power, and how the lives of all the people in the vessel, together with the vessel herself and all she may contain —a hundred thousand pounds' worth of goods, perhaps —are dependent upon him. My precious eyes! there's responsibility for you. I was once master of a small ship, in which I took out two hundred convicts and a number of soldiers, and I very well remember one night, there being a calm on, and the vessel lying as still as a sleeping baby in the arms of its mother, stopping dead in my pacing the short poop, and thinking of the crowds of people that lay asleep under my feet; and, my lads, I was so much agitated by the reflection, so much bewildered all on a sudden as it might be by this thought of what was on my shoulders, and what was expected of me, that I tell you as a man who has seen some tough weather and is not easily moved, it would have done me good if I could have cried."

Here a boy laughed. Old Gale fixed a steady gaze upon him under knitted brows. Weevil, giving his head another polish with the handkerchief that was nearly as big as a small ensign, proceeded—

"Yes, young gents, I could have cried, and if I had I shouldn't have been ashamed of owning to it; for you may depend upon it that there's nary man as can suffer in his manhood by the feelings of his heart making themselves when very strong expressed in his eyes."

He blew his nose with the report as of a maintopsail bursting in a gale of wind, buried his handkerchief vehemently in his pocket, and continued—

"You'll understand, young gentlemen, that this here lecture of mine concerns sailing ships only, for you all of ye will have to sarve in square riggers before ye come to steam, and there's nothing aboard a steamer outside the engine-room ye can learn that you oughtn't to have brought aboard with you as a piece of knowledge from the sailing ship. I reckon it's the intention of every young gent as is looking at me to become in due course a mate and then a master. Your respected parents will no doubt apprentice you first. What benefits you're a-going to get for the money it'll cost your pas to send ye to sea I'm sure I don't know. For my part, I'd rather give ye a hand through the hawse-pipe. Better, I say, to begin in the fok'stle outright than in a deck house amidships. It must come to your knowing all about a ship from the flying-jibboom end to the taffrail, and why not begin in the place where you get the soundest marine eddication? However, this is no business of mine, and I didn't mean that this lecture should intervolve it."

"Involve it," said Gale, mildly.

"What did I say?" said Weevil, turning to him.

"You said intervolve it!" exclaimed one of the boys.

"Well, then, involve it," said old Weevil, blandly; "but intervolve it sounds to me the correctest. Your captain here, my old friend Gale, is a man whose abilities as a sailor I know well and thoroughly respect, and I don't think, therefore, he'll quarrel with me for saying that in my opinion there's too much fuss made about navigation in these times. I'm not going to stand here and say that a man oughtn't to be able to find his way about with a sextant, though the best sailors the world has ever seen carried their ships safely all over the globe without caring whether the sun shone or not,

and in perfect ignorance of chreenometers. But what I will stand here and say is that the sort of knowledge that is nowadays expected in mates and masters don't touch the reasons why ninety out of every hundred ships are lost or damaged. Don't go and pretend that Weevil stood up here and told ye that navigation's of no use. That wouldn't be true. But what ye may say is the responsibilities of mates and masters are so great, he considers there's a deal too much weight laid upon the scientific part of seamanship, and much too much too little laid upon practical knowledge. Don't you go and suppose that because you're smart hands at working out sights, you're fit for having any kind of charge in a ship. No, young gents! you may have 'Norie's Epitome' and the 'Nautical Almanac' at your fingers' ends; you may know all about the sun, moon, and stars, and what to do with them, but without the practical knowledge you can only get by going to sea, by watching, by thinking, by arguing, by suffering, you'll no more be fit to take command of a vessel than the greenest hand that ever signed articles for a shilling a month."

He paused with a sidelong glance at old Gale, who sat with a wooden face, waiting, perhaps, for further opinions before he ventured to comment.

"It's the rarest thing in the world," continued Weevil, "to hear of a loss through want of a knowledge of navigation, which shows that there can be no lack of that sort of learning knocking about at sea. Disasters happen from the want of simple precautions; the lead isn't used; there's been too much hurry in thick weather; currents haven't been allowed for; a bad look-out has been kept. Pay close attention, young gents, to all that Captain Martin Gale tells ye, and master the

navigation he's teaching you as fully as you can. But bear in mind also what old Weevil tells you; the safety of ships depends upon so many points, which can only be understood by carefully doing your duty as sailors, and by getting all the ideas you can by watching and studying, that it's nothing short of a crime and a deceit to young men to put navigation at the top of the list of a man's requirements to act as mate or master."

Gale slightly shook his head, a gesture old Weevil did not seem to observe.

"Science, young gents, on a fine day or a clear night, will tell ye where ye are, and that's always worth knowing. But where does practice come in? It comes in in collision, or, I should say, in the avoidance of it; in stranding, in anchoring, in the shifting of cargoes, in the choking of pumps, in leakage; it comes in on lee shores; ye can't do without it in foggy weather; you must be burnt if it ain't there in the case of fire; it's wanted when there's ice, when a ship's dismasted, when sails are lost by splitting or being blown away, in capsizing, in squalls, when ye lose your rudder, in lowering boats, when you're deeply laden, when you are lying-to, when if you are light your ballast shifts, and when you're in soundings. There, my lads," exclaimed the old fellow, who had been gradually raising his voice till it grew penetrating with its triumphant treble, "that's where practice steps in, and in every case I've mentioned navigation wouldn't be of more sarvice to you than the tail of an eel to a drowning man. D'ye allow that, Gale?"

"Yes, yes," answered Gale, "that's right enough, Weevil; only, you see, as mate or master a man must know navigation."

"Why, yes, of course," cried Weevil, "and so he

ought; but what I say is don't let it boss all marine knowledge, don't let it stand atop of the catalogue as if it was first and essential, and all what comes under it, useful only, and to be picked up as ye like and as ye go. An old North Shields captain, who had been to sea as master and man for fifty years, and upon whose nautical opinion I'd pin my faith if I should be drownded for it if he proved wrong, this man said to me, 'Any seaman of practical experience, having sufficient skill and good judgment in calculating the position of a ship by the use of a chart and the latitude, could navigate a vessel with almost as much safety on a voyage round the world as those who have a thorough knowledge of navigation in all its branches, provided he used proper care when in the latitude of danger. I do not mean to say,' said he, 'that a sufficient knowledge of navigation is not necessary for those in charge of vessels. I only intend to show that the safety of ships does not depend upon that point so much as is generally believed;' and those are exactly my sentiments," said old Weevil.

Here the old gentleman broke off by saying something in a whisper to Captain Gale, the meaning of which was presently interpreted by the arrival of a glass of brandy-and-water, at which the old fellow took a pull with a thoughtful countenance, though his preoccupation could not veil the expression of relish that entered his features with the first drink.

"And now, my hearties," said he presently, "for a few further observations touching the manly calling it's my pleasure to lecture you about. First of all, my advice to you is when you go to sea don't be too much of a sailor. Don't think it's nautical to use bad language. Learn to keep your temper. Bear a hand when you're called upon to do a job, and being gentlemen, and the

sons of gentlemen and ladies, strive never to lose the privilege of being what you are, by acting as if you were something else. Make no mistake, sailors like to have gentlemen over them. There's a something about refinement and good breeding that makes those who serve under such qualities in a man proud of him if he'll only allow them to be so. As for me, I'm no example to talk to ye in this manner, I dare say ye'll think. My father was a ship's carpenter, and I begun life afore the mast, and I was seventeen years old afore I could read, and nigh upon nineteen afore I could write my own name."

Here one of the boys laughed, but his merriment was promptly extinguished by a blow in the ribs from the elbow of the lad who sat next to him.

"But, such as my beginning was," said the old man, looking gently at the youth whose guffaw had made him falter for a moment, "yet when I found myself in a position that gave me power over others, it was always my struggle to behave towards them as if I was in their place and they over me. A gentleman in the meaning of that word, so far as eddication goes and polished manners, I wasn't. But that didn't prevent me from trying to act as if I had the self-respect of the first nobleman in the land, and one consequence of my resolution to deal with sailors as though they were my messmates more than my shipmates, and as though they had the feelings in them of men, capable of being maddened by insult and injury, and of being softened and rendered good and true men by kindness and consideration, was that when I was mate my watch was always the smartest of the two, and when I was captain my crew kept to me as if the ship had been their home ashore. Therefore, young gents, my advice to you is, never be too nautical; let the spirit of old ocean be in

your hearts to the full, but be careful to carry the proprieties of the land with you, and never forget, whatever be your usage, or whatever lot may befall you, that you are gentlemen whom the people under you will respect, admire, and be loyal to as such, so long as you make them understand that you are true to the best feelings of your nature."

I was so pleased with these remarks that I uttered a loud cheer, that was immediately taken up by all the others, and the room rang again to some very hearty, lively notes. Weevil looked extremely pleased, and gazed at the lads from one to another with a most benevolent and affectionate expression in his eyes.

"And now," said he, "young gents, for a few plain observations of a practical nature; things I should be glad if ye'd keep fast in your memory, though of course it isn't to be expected you could grasp my meaning till you've been to sea for some time. First, as to collision. That is the greatest danger of these days, and I reckon that the shipmaster who's seen much sarvice and has never been in a mess of the kind is a man that truly deserves decorating. Now, here's a rule or two that ye'd be doing yourselves good by stowing away in your heads for future use. First of all, the officer of the watch should keep a bright and proper look-out at all times, and he should also see that the hands stationed for this duty are vigilant, and wide-awake to their responsibilities. Next, as I'm talking of sailing ships, always have your vessel under such sail as gives you command of her, because at any moment you may want her to answer the helm quickly. Make up your mind to act at once, and never shift your helm a second time, for the most drowning quality in a man that I'm aware of is indecision."

Old Gale coughed, and Weevil looked at him; but, nothing being said, the skipper proceeded.

"Never cross a ship's hawse when you can pass under her stern. When navigation is difficult by reason of crowded waters, keep the best men in the ship at the helm. And now for some advice touching anchoring. Take care never to ride with a short scope of cable if the sea's heavy. Always have your second anchor ready in case of the other getting foul. See your staysails and other canvas that may be needful all ready to help in keeping the anchor clear. Sight your anchor if you think it's foul, and never bring up in a ship's hawse if the wind's strong and there's a lee tide. Leakage in these days is different from what it used to be; I mean that when an iron plate gets a hole knocked in it, or rivets drop out, or landings open, it's more serious than the started butt or opened seam of a timber-built ship. Still, I would say, disheartening as leaky ships are to seamen, never be afraid of a leak. Scores of seamen will tell you that for years and years, in voyages they have made, it was either pump or sink with them. A friend of mine told me he was twelve years at sea before he knew what a tight ship was. It is the first duty of a man to bring his ship home, whether he belongs forward or aft, and short of the breakdown or choking of the pumps, or the absolute exhaustion of the crew, there's no excuse for abandonment on the ground of leakage only. As to ice there's not much to fear from that if ye'll only make up your mind, owner or no owner, never to be in a hurry when hurry may be dangerous. Ice is a thing a man ought to be able to smell."

"I always could," interrupted old Gale.

"Ay, and so could I," exclaimed Weevil, "even in the midst of a snowstorm, and when the berg was to

leeward and three mile off. Anyhow, if ye can't smell it, there's the thermometer to look at. There's nothing that ought to keep masters' and mates' eyes so skinned as ice. Ye want optics astern of ye, as well as on either side of your nose. I've been at night sailing amongst quantities of loose ice, and found the only safe thing to do was to keep the mainyard aback, and the vessel under such sail as to give me ready command over her for wearing or backing astern quickly. Then, young gents, there's the question of dismasting. There's less chance of this disaster happening now in these days of wire-rigging than formerly, when hemp-rigging was used, which, when new, slackened, and was of no use as supports unless set up taut afresh, which might be required when no safe opportunity offered to do it; yet, I've known ships to be dismasted by masts having been sprung unknown to the captain, perhaps through moving ships in harbour and getting foul of other vessels, and my advice to you is to remember, when you come to taking charge, always to carefully examine your spars before starting on long voyages, 'specially in the way of the cap or cross-trees. So with sails. Canvas, like crews, wants kindly usage, or it'll betray you. To get canvas furled or reefed with as little shaking as possible is a test of good seamanship in my opinion, and I should judge a good deal of a man's sailorly qualities by his method of going to work in that direction. See to your clewlines particularly, that they be sound ropes, and contrive that your buntlines, brails, reef points—all the ropes that are in constant friction with the sails—be of the softest material, for I've known many a sail to be split through friction of ropes, when other parts of it were strong enough to have held out in a hurricane. I should like to say something to you about squalls, how

best to behave in them; about loss of rudders, the stowage of cargoes, and many other matters which belong to practical seamanship, and which you'll have thoroughly to master if ever you're to be held qualified to take charge; but until ye go to sea, and get to know the names of things, and find out what the ocean is like, and what a tumultuous playground it is, and how it requires as close watching as if every cloud overhead, and every billow underneath, was a wild beast, to be kept at bay only by keeping your eye fixed upon it, much of what I should have to say would be unintelligible to you. Therefore, young gentlemen, I'll wind up by exhorting ye to understand that the knowledge of navigation alone ain't going to make sailor-men of you. Larn it sartinly, and get to know as much of it as ye can, but don't let it boss the other requirements. The best sailors the world ever saw, the safest masters to sail under, the bravest and most skilful commanders to fight under, were the men who had served their time in coasters; and why? Because they had to go through such a training, they had to encounter so many risks, endure so many perils, meet with circumstances making such demands upon their instant judgment, prompt skill, and ready courage, that when they quitted their trade and shipped elsewhere they had nothing more to learn. They had seen the worst, and the sea had nothing fresh for them. Walk in their steps, young gentlemen, when ye go to sea; master all ye can, let nothing be too insignificant for you to ask about. Don't trouble yourselves about learning knots and how to make ornamental ends to ropes. View a ship as a big machine, and reason her out for yourself, as the builders and riggers did when they put her together, and above all things never forget that the old red ensign is as noble

a flag as the red cross. It's flown over hearts as manly, deeds as brave, sufferings as great, heroism as beautiful as any ye can read about in naval histories. It's the symbol of the wealth and commerce of this country. Its signal halliards come to your hands, young gentlemen; to the hands of you and to the like of you. Keep the old meteor hoisted, let it be untarnished, and by your conduct as men and sailors let it blow as proudly upon the breeze as ever it has since it was first hoisted in the name of Britannia. And so God bless ye, young gentlemen, and it is the hearty wish of Captain Weevil that you may all command fine ships, and add fresh glory to the name of the British sailor by your skill when in danger and your decision when in difficulties, and your humanity towards your fellow-creatures and your integrity as men, and by your reverence for the Being whose majesty and power you will never better understand than when you are upon that old ocean whose heaving surface you have chosen for a calling and a home."

Concluding his lecture in these words, my old friend Weevil seated himself amidst the loud applause of his audience, and the most impressive memory I carried away with me from Captain Gale's little house was the self-complacency in Weevil's face as he sat listening to the plaudits of the boys, with moist eyes fixed upon the chandelier, and his hands clasped upon his waistcoat.

OLD SHIPS.

THERE was very recently, and there may be still afloat, a ship aged ninety-five years, named the *Cognac Packet*, commanded by one Captain Bulton. She was built at Bursledon, Hants, in 1792, and took her name from the circumstance of having been engaged in carrying brandy from France. She was rigged as a brig, and is described as being very nearly as square as a box. The last port to which she belonged was Harwich, and the good people of that town may still be amused with a sight of one of the oldest ships in the country yet engaged in earning money for her owner.

The fate of vessels is very much like the fate of human beings. The average life of a ship, I believe, is about twelve years. Some perish very soon after they are born, some struggle through a few years and then vanish, some go on living their allotted span pretty defiantly, though very unhappy in the gales of wind they encounter, and the misfortunes which overtake them in respect of the shifting of cargo, the losing of spars, failures in the engine-room, and so forth. Some, but they are few, survive into a venerable age, float hoarily upon the blue, and, with much creaking and rheumatic straining of their aged bones, go on sailing out of living memory, and arrive among a new generation, who survey them as bits of fossilized history, and talk of the Monarchs who have died, the battles which

have been lost and won, the marvellous changes which have been wrought since the old ships first slipped down the ways to the sawing of a fiddler and the huzzas of a crowd. Unhappily, the life of a stout vessel which has done her work bravely does not always close with the honour and dignity one could wish. The ocean sepulchre is denied her. Her inveterate trick of obstinate domination proves eventually her humiliation instead of her triumph. She shows very raggedly at last, and is laid by and offered to any one willing to pay a few pounds for the privilege of breaking her up. Perhaps if she were invariably knocked to pieces her dispersal would be only less dignified than her decent interment by old Neptune. The hammer would end her as a melancholy show. A wreck lying black and bare on the yellow sand of a shoal at low water is a dismal sight; but a good old ship dismantled, lying alongside a quay, grey and with yawning seams, disdained by the maritime knackers, an echoing nursery for the rude and boisterous sport of mudlarks, is a far sadder spectacle. Yonder wave-swept hulk fell worthily in honourable conflict; but this poor old craft, with a board in her rigging offering her for a mere trifle, is ending her days in distress and scorn, an object for the sneers of passers-by and for the stones of small boys. Were she a man-of-war she would engage attention. There would be a feeling of respect in those who regarded her. The imaginative mind would people her decks with trim salts, and decorate her with the red coat of the marine and the glittering "swab" of the naval officer of the day. As a vessel without tragic, romantic, or heroic memories, however, what significance can any one find in her melancholy appeal? She is like an aged pauper for whom no union has been invented; yet some of her triumphs over the wildness of waters

and the fury of winds, some of her achievements in the form of smart runs and dexterous escapes, and some of the pictures of the human story which runs through her life might if related detain her for many an eye which would otherwise see in her nothing but a frowsy, drowsy, grey and lean old butterbox.

An instance of the base uses to which brave old ships may come at last is to be found in *La Hogue*, a vessel long famous as an Australian liner. She is now* a coal-hulk anchored off Funchal, Madeira. This ship was for years one of the best known of the fine fleet owned by the late Duncan Dunbar, and must to this hour be a name as familiar as a household word in many an Australian as in many an English home. She was built at Sunderland in 1853, and is therefore only thirty-four years old, a mere girl in comparison with that venerable dame, the *Cognac Packet*. Yet in thirty-four years she has done such great and useful work that it would be difficult for any one to view her in her present grimy and squalid state without an emotion of pity. "Peace hath her victories, no less renowned than war," and craft of the kind of *La Hogue* illustrate those victories as fabrics like Nelson's noble three-decker in Portsmouth Water symbolize and perpetuate the memories of mighty deeds of arms. It would be interesting to know how many thousands of bales of wool the ship *La Hogue*, now a sheer hulk in the dismallest sense of the words, has delivered safely in the East India Docks in her time; what quantities of useful commodities spoken of under the heading of "general cargo" she has conveyed to our thriving kinsmen at Sydney; how many icebergs she has sighted in the thirty-two or thirty-three times she has rounded the Horn; how many

* 1887.

leagues of dark blue water she has traversed since her keel was first laid. Yet the true pathos of such a sheer hulk lies in thoughts of the people she has carried; the infants who are now middle-aged men and women; the blushing young ladies who are now hardy and seasoned matrons and, many of them, grandmothers; the spirited youths who paced her decks without a shilling in their pockets, and whose sons have long since inherited their very substantial squatting businesses up country. A hulk like *La Hogue* marks the flight of time even more startlingly than a gravestone. In the space of this vessel's life may be found many amazing chapters of the story of Australian progress, and the appeal she makes to the passengers of the great ocean steamers touching at Madeira must inevitably gather force from the perception that to her and such ships as she the Australian story owes no little of its brilliancy. One is tempted to moralize on this poor old coal-hulk as did Hamlet upon the skull of Yorick. Where are the gilt, the mirrors, the finery of her cuddy? Into what land of shadows has vanished the little procession of stewards bearing in the dinner from the small galley forward, past sobbing scuppers and wet decks, sloping like the roof of a house? Possibly the melancholy concertina may be still heard of nights on the ship's forecastle, when the labour of heaving out or taking in coal is over; but never shall the hearty fiddler, perched upon the boom forward, be there listened to again, nor the slapping of Jack's feet in a hornpipe, nor the sounds of a piano aft, with couples airily revolving on the poop whilst the curl of silver moon slides down past the awning, and the solemn respiration of the equatorial swell awakens a sound as of deep sighs from the dew-darkened canvas swinging softly in and out from the masts.

Some ships have proved noble relics in their day. Such was the *Centurion*, the queer old tub in which Commodore Anson cruised in the great South Sea, and with which he captured the tall Spanish galleon. Such was the *Golden Hind*, Sir Francis Drake's ship, which lay, a wonder and a show, for many years, off Deptford, when she was finally broken up. A chair was made out of her planks, and presented to the University of Oxford, which gave rise to Cowley's epigram—

> "Drake and his ship could not have wished from fate
> An happier station or more blest estate;
> For lo! a seat of endless rest is given
> To her in Oxford and to him in Heaven."

The *Golden Hind* has long since disappeared, but we have the noblest trophy of all the ages with us in the old *Victory*, slumbering dotingly off Portsmouth. What craft worthy to perpetuate the traditions she serves to extend shall replace her when her time comes? The country ought to make sure, however, that that time shall be as long in coming as it is possible for human effort to contrive. Some may venture to doubt if the *Victory* is as well cared for as so grand, so incomparable, so irreplaceable a relic merits. Familiarity has perhaps bred a certain indifference and induced a lack of that pious care which it is the first duty of the nation to bestow on the structure in which the famous admiral died. Such a ship as this ought to be as carefully tended as Westminster Abbey. Even as an impulse and an inspiration, she is of prodigious national value. No sailor can view her without a stirring of his heart's best blood in him, and one feels that she ought to be cherished with not less devotion than is dedicated abroad to the relics and remains of saints. It is, of course, impossible to conceive of any merchantman rivalling in

interest the famous ships of war. Yet the red ensign has its history too, and there are vessels whose sheer hulks posterity would have been glad to look at. There was the Indiaman, for instance, in which old Nathaniel Dance beat off Linois' squadron: she would have richly embellished any tract of waters. Another vessel the world would not willingly have lost was the *Betsy Cains*, as rare a fabric in her day as the "first folio Shakespeare" is rare as a book in these times. She brought over to England William Prince of Orange, in 1688, and she went to pieces in a gale of wind off Tynemouth, in February, 1827, one hundred and thirty-nine years later. It is supposed that she was by no means a new ship when used by the Prince, so that she might have been a hundred and fifty or a hundred and sixty years of age when she perished. She had been one of Queen Anne's royal yachts, and there is every reason to suppose that had she been suffered to enjoy a tranquil old age instead of being put to trade between Shields and Hamburg she might still be in existence, the oldest vessel in the world, and of its kind the greatest curiosity. If, however, ships could speak, we may take it they would choose rather to die an honourable death at sea than languish on for a few years in the miserable condition of a coal hulk. The many, in Australia as here, who remember *La Hogue* in her prime will think of her now with sorrow.

There are marine survivals, however, of vanished structures which in their way are hardly less interesting than the craft in their integrity would themselves be.

An old brass cannon and a piece of a ship's capstan of a pattern that probably has not been seen within the last hundred and fifty years were thrown up on the Mexican coast near to Acapulco, and it is believed by

those who are knowing in such matters that they are the very small remains of a large Spanish galleon—one of the Manila ships—which foundered off Acapulco shortly after she had started on a voyage to the Philippines. It may be questioned whether the relics of an Armada ship would be more interesting in any sense than those of one of the great treasure-vessels which formed the cynosure of all the buccaneering eyes of the day. To mention the Acapulco ship is to hark back to the days of Candish, of Drake, Dampier, Anson, and a score of other great and hardy sea-captains, who made it the business of their lives to "singe the King of Spain his beard." There could have been nothing more engaging, more inviting, more brilliant to the piratical imagination than the dream of the contents of the galleon's hold. Crusadoes of gold, chests of pieces of eight, crucifixes of precious ore exquisitely wrought, silver and gold in bars, silks, spices, tea—a commodity inexpressibly costly—chocolate and sweetmeats, were among the items of freights which heaped their prodigious values to flush with the main-hatch, so that there was scarcely room for a rat to turn amidst the glorious and princely commodities, whose owner was his most Christian Majesty. The samples which the buccaneers fell in with justified them in forming extraordinary theories as regards the values of the annual vessels which sailed with the King of Spain's money. Dampier, for instance, in 1684, came across three ships all laden as deep as they could swim. He found in the biggest ship many tons of marmalade of quinces, and a stately mule, and he ought also to have found in her 800,000 pieces of eight, which had been put on board of her for conveyance to Panama; but unhappily for Dampier, the merchants, whilst loading her, hearing

that the freebooters were cruising about in the neighbourhood, ordered the money to be taken out of her and brought ashore. There are some very curious particulars of the Acapulco ship given by the Abbé Raynal. He describes her as a vessel of about 2000 tons, and he adds that she was despatched every year from the port of Manila. The law was supposed to prohibit her from carrying more than 4000 bales of merchandise, but she was usually loaded with at least double that quantity. The cost of building and of fitting out and the expenses of the voyage were borne by the Government, whose indemnification never exceeded 75,000 piastres, nearly £17,000. The departure of the vessel was usually fixed for the month of July. Her practice was to steer northward as far as the 30th degree of latitude, where she picked up the trade wind which blew her to her destination. The captain had his course pricked for him, and the smallest deviation from it was attended with severe penalties. It took the unwieldy old waggon six months to plough the peaceful Pacific to the Philippines. The Abbé attributes this incredible slowness to the vessel being overstocked with men and merchandise, and to the timidity of her people, who would frequently heave their ship to on a fine, quiet night, through fear of the darkness.

Raynal, however, omits to point out a difference between the annual ship from Manila to Acapulco, and the annual ship from Acapulco to Manila. The former was mainly the object of the buccaneers' attacks, the reason being that when she sailed from Manila, being deeply laden with a variety of bulky goods, such as Chinese silks and manufactures, Indian stuffs of all kinds, calicoes and chintz, besides embroidery, goldsmiths' work, and so forth, the produce of the Chinese

living at Manila, there was no room for mounting her tier of guns. In addition to this, her crew were as few as was consistent with her safe navigation, so that her space should not be crowded with provisions. She was, therefore, weakly manned and armed disproportionately to her capacity, and was, in consequence, the prey of the freebooters. Her value was not equal to that of the other ship, but she was rich enough to repay piratical proceedings, her cargo being generally estimated at three millions of dollars. On the other hand, the chief freight of the ship from Acapulco was silver and gold. She carried no bulky cargo, there was plenty of room in her, and before she left port her lower tier was mounted and some companies of soldiers added to supplement the fighting powers of the crew, amounting in all to about 600 men. It is reasonable, then, that our friends the freebooters should have looked askant at the Acapulco ship when she happened to be bound to Manila.

These vessels were built at the Philippines, of timber that did not splinter, with sides much thicker and stronger than those of ships of the same burden constructed in Europe. Captain Cooke (not to be confounded with the later great circumnavigator), who started, in company with Rogers and Courtney, in 1708, to capture the Acapulco ship, gives a graphic account of the fight and the failure of the contest. The *Duke*, the *Duchess*, and the *Marquis* were the three Englishmen that attacked her. The struggle was a long one. The galleon was a tall ship, in the old meaning of the word, and her people fought for her furiously. Her burden was 900 tons, and in addition to 450 of a crew, besides passengers, she had 150 European pirates on board, who, having their ill-gotten booty with them,

were resolved to defend it to the last. Spite of the incessant raids made upon the annual ship by the most desperate set of sailors that ever went to sea, she was only captured three times, namely, by Candish in 1587, by Rogers in 1709, and by Anson in 1742. The account in Candish's voyage of his capture of the ship, which was named the *Santa Anna*, is peculiarly graphic and vigorous. It was on the 4th of November that our brave and great seaman fell in with the Spaniard. In the afternoon they were close enough to exchange broadsides. She was a vessel of 700 tons, apparently full of men, to oppose whom Candish had not above fifty or sixty at most. Not a creature was to be seen on board the Spaniard, so carefully had they crowned their defences, though from behind their "sights," as they were called, they discharged lances, javelins, rapiers, and "an innumerable quantity of large stones, which they threw overboard upon our heads and into our ship so fast, and being so many of them, that they put us off the ship again with the loss of two of our men, who were slain, and four or five wounded." However, the English continued to ply them so hard with shot that the Spaniards gave up, and, after a fight that had lasted nearly six hours, hoisted a flag of truce. The ship's freight is represented as consisting of 122,000 pezoes of gold, with large quantities of silk, satin, damask, musk, "and divers other merchandise and great plenty of all manner of provisions, with the choice of many conserves and several sorts of very good wine."

This conflict is only less memorable than Drake's famous fight with the *Cacafuego*. The vessel was not an Acapulco ship, but she was as good in her way as the richest of them. It took Drake six days to unload

the prize. A Spanish writer, Lopez Vaz, says that there were in the *Cacafuego* 850,000 pezoes of silver, and 40,000 pezoes of gold, all which was "customed," as the expression then was. "But what treasure," he adds, "they had uncustomed I know not, for many times they carry almost as much more as they pay custom for; otherwise the king would take it from them if they should be known to have any great sum." It dazzles the imagination to read of these wonderful prizes. How heavily the haughty Don suffered by the amazing audacity and courage of Drake alone is a matter of history. It is calculated by Lopez Vaz that the English captain carried from the coast of Peru nearly a million and a quarter ducats' worth of silver. He also carried away 100,000 pezoes of gold, equal to ten quintals, each quintal valued at 1500 Spanish ducats, besides gold and silver ornaments, pearls, precious stones, coined money, and other things of great value. The whole cargo brought home by the *Golden Hind* was valued at £800,000. This is a large sum when regard is had to the comparative value of money. Small wonder that the Great South Sea became the haunt of sailors with easy consciences. It was only necessary, long after the time of the noble Drake, to speak of the Acapulco ship to recall the glorious captures of Sir Francis, and to make the very ocean that washed the seaboard of Mexico and of the South American continent seem to run with auriferous surges in the enchanted imaginations of the lean and fearless gentlemen of Limehouse and Greenhithe.

Of course, the most renowned of all those old conflicts with the Don was Commodore Anson's taking of the *Nuestra Senhora de Cabadonga*, whose commander was a Portuguese named Dom Jeronimo de Montero. This

wonderful galleon was pierced for sixty-four guns, though she only carried thirty-six when she came into action, most of them being twelve-pounders, and seventeen of them brass. But then she also carried twenty-eight petereroes along her rails, quarters, and tops, each of these little pieces, which were of the nature of a swivel, shooting four-pound balls. Her fighting force consisted of 640 men. The wonder of this famous action lies in the inequality of the contest. The *Centurion* was rusty and foul with long keeping the sea; there was, besides, much sickness on board; moreover, she had originally started with the very worst kind of crew that the judgment of a Government could select for the extending of Britannia's name and fame in distant parts; and a large proportion of these aged cripples and farmhouse greenhorns were dead. The Spaniard was in a wonderful posture of defence. She was well furnished with small arms, and fitted with close quarters and a strong network of 2-in. rope, fortified with half-pikes, placed in the manner of *chevaux de frise*, to prevent the enemy from boarding. Nevertheless, she had sixty-four men killed and eighty-four wounded, whilst the *Centurion* had only two men killed, and a lieutenant and sixteen wounded, all of whom, with the exception of one, recovered. There is a true Nelsonian touch in Anson's disposition of his slender company. Thirty of the best marksmen were in the tops; two men were placed at a gun to load it; and gangs formed of ten men each were appointed to go from gun to gun to run them out and fire them as fast as they were loaded. By this means the *Centurion* was enabled to keep up an incessant fire. The value of the prize was reckoned at a million and a half of dollars. The Acapulco ship continued to ply long after this business, but the buccaneers had

abandoned the field, the pirate pure and simple could not find his account in the South Sea, and stuck to the West Indian parallels, and so the old craft, made famous by the repeated efforts to capture them, sank into the general obscurity of the ocean fleets.

SEASIDE EFFECTS.

I AM never weary of surveying the picture of the English Channel from the summit of the North Foreland. Not in the wildest weather, not even when the bitter January north-east gale flings something of the weight of the German Ocean into the stress of billows, do you ever witness a sea here comparable to what runs in small gales further south and west; the liquid tract is hedged about by shoals, and let the wind blow from what quarter it will there is some bank of sand or forefoot of chalk rock to break the fury of the surge. But, on the other hand, here pass such processions of ships as must be sought for in vain in any other maritime highway. The charm of deep-sea fishing is, you never know what you are going to catch. So here, as you stand gazing oceanwards, hard by the white Lighthouse, you never can guess what sort of picture will present itself next. There is the true sea atmosphere here too, the airy summer distant junction that makes a mirage of the far-off becalmed sail, vague dimnesses of lingering smoke which give a sober colouring to the bold stare of the white cloud peering over the edge of some indefinable haze, the hard sharpness of the green sea-line trembling against the cold grey, the phantasmal swarming of shadows in the gathering glow of moonshine whose vibratory lines of icy radiance seem to be drawn, like

silver wire, longer and longer yet by the countless busy fingers of the restless waters. The blot or two of faintness, star-like and illusive, hanging in the far-off sky, denoting the coast of France, affects the eye as a fancy, defines no limits, but, on the contrary, fires the imagination with dreams of distance. The frame is perfect, let the month be what it will, and the canvas changes its beauties and its inspirations to every glance.

There are many who abhor the sea. It is a waste without meaning or music. There are no syllables for their ears in the thunder of its surf, no thoughts too deep for tears to be got from the soft and melancholy singing of the foamless ripples, no glory in the meridian light standing like a pillar of fire in its deep heart, no grandeur in the greatness and the mystery of its dominions, no sovereignty in the storm-demons' career on the roaring backs of their foaming coursers, no magic in the scarlet pavilions of the opening morn. Old ocean may "break, break, break," in vain for such honest folks. Sentiment cannot step one inch beyond the memory of the heaving steamboat, the pale-faced Frenchman, poor Smithers with his head in a tureen, and another half-hour yet before the pier shall show its nose.

Perhaps if such people had even a little liking for the sea she would use them better. After all, old ocean does not consist altogether of crossing between Calais and Dover and the Bay of Biscay O. There is a great deal more further on. You may begin with the little child standing to its knees in the summer surf, and not stop till the heart of the cyclone is entered. From the top of this white foreland height one gets as pretty a hint of the magnificent raree-show as the heart could desire. The feeling is like that of standing in Rotten

Row and seeing the people pass. It is a lovely girl with the eyes of the South and the hair and skin of Thule, it is a gouty and groaning old man, it is a lordly creature, nobly horsed, it is a poor little scarecrow blundering along and getting home in the end.

Ships are like human beings. I have said so again and again, and I believe it as ardently as if I were the first man to affirm it. Observe yonder yacht. It will not do to pretend that she does not know herself to be beautiful. She illustrates Pope's exquisite expression of the character of a fine lady :—

> "Favours to none, to all she smiles extends;
> Oft she rejects, but never once offends."

Yes, the smile of sunlight on her bright and lovely canvas she extends to all, even to the poor little oyster-man dropping respectfully into her wake. But whom does she favour? She rejects the enamoured caress of the wave with a saucy smiting of her bows, but that she does not offend it you may tell by observing how the kiss is again and again attempted. She fits the scene like the gull that is flapping past her on a course as straight as a rook's, the dye of its wings concealing them to the bare sight, and leaving nothing visible but the snow-white body that but for its constancy might pass for the melting head of a little sea. Now, overwhelming to the gaze of the radiant little sea-coquette, there steams solemnly past a huge white troopship, her side perforated like a sieve with scuttles or port-holes, and her stern full of handsome windows. Her bulk makes her appear to move slowly, yet she passes the yacht as fast as a man could walk. What is her speed? I assume her length to be so many feet; and, counting in seconds the time she occupies in passing a buoy that swirls to the tide in the grip of its ground tackle and

leans southwardly, I calculate her rate to be twelve and a quarter knots. Her tall white sides show up finely against the blue beyond. There is a sort of sheen upon her that seems to overflow her outline like the pearly glimmer that white sails throw a little way beyond their own bolt-ropes ; it has the effect of a thin radiant mist, out of which, when she starboards her helm for a more northerly course and brings the sunshine to bear upon her windows, there leap double and triple rows of tongues of white fire one after another, so like the flashings of a broadside that the ear is instinctively bent to catch the report. An immense double-funnelled steamer outward bound comes along, and when the two vessels are abreast I am surprised to notice that whilst the troopship is half as tall again as the other, the ocean boat is nearly twice her length. The red flag at the ensign staff is dipped, and down very handsomely comes the red cross. Those men-o'-warsmen know how to handle bunting. She keeps her hat off some minutes after the merchantman has mastheaded his colours, why I cannot imagine, until I spy a little brig hidden by her structure, slide into view past her quarter with a little bit of a red flag lowered. So, bowing to the salutations she receives as she goes, the great white ship, sparkling like some diamond-encrusted hill, thrusts majestically onwards, with a curl of rich white under her bow, and trailing a short, smooth wake that shines like a rainbow under her counter to the lustre of her stern windows.

She and the fine new mail-boat dwarf all about them into insignificance. They detain the eye, and what will be picturesque when they are gone is now somewhat mean and squalid. As they grow small and vague in the distance, the charms of yonder old collier steal out.

Every cloth is of different hue; she is like an infirm old body who, in an hour of bitter need, has stripped a scarecrow, and draped herself in garments designed to terrify birds; she seems to hug her rags to her lean breast as she staggers onwards with uncertain gait. Yet the spirit of the beauty of the deep possesses her; the sunlight is upon her; she hobbles against a background of clouds of cream and bronze, the salt foam sings under her bends, there is distance, too, to soften her. An old man in a tall hat, the aged lady's husband, no doubt, stands at the tiller, gazing sometimes aloft, sometimes directing a glance over either quarter. The breeze heads her; the old boom-foresail cannot do its work; the tide does not serve her, and the lightship a long way past her begins to slide ahead instead of astern of her. Down jib! down stay foresail! up mainsail, and let go the anchor! Three or four heads bob along behind the rail, a rusty piece of iron is let fall, the cable is helped through the pipe, and the lean, weary, and spiritless craft, like to some beldame tottering off the dusty high-road to rest her creaking limbs upon the grass, nods peacefully upon the quiet waters, and so shall go on slumbering till the wind comes fair again and starts the little crew upon clanking the crazy windlass.

A fairer, but not a quainter, sight is the full-rigged ship coming up Channel. It is blowing a brave westerly wind; she carries it a little abaft the beam off here, and ploughs through it with home-sick eagerness. There is a yearning in the lifting of every cloth upon her. The very skysail, the tiny topmast stretch of cloth, strains its hardest, like a child's distended cheeks with its lips at a penny trumpet, as though from its airy seat it had caught sight of the ship's home far up

the gleaming river. Yes! this is no idle conceit. I have observed again and again a something in the appearance of a ship close to home after a long voyage that denoted a perception of her weary galloping and cantering and walking being nearly over, as complete in its way as the sentience expressed by the dog or the horse. The hearts and thoughts of her sailors are like a soul in her. They make her a living thing. Yonder ship has the impetuous bearing of a human desire. It is idle to pretend that, were her head pointed the contrary way and the wind reversed, she would discover the same manner of going. She floats up swiftly and proudly upon the gaze, with excitement in every little hurry of shadow upon her rounded canvas, and impatience in the sliding thrust of her cutwater. The pilot's flag blows at her peak; and the only self-possessed man on board is the pilot himself—that little figure marching to and fro from the helm to the break of the poop. The tug snorting in chase of her a mile astern helps the suggestion of eagerness. Here is such a picture as was never yet hung upon manorial or castle walls—the wet flashing of light from the ship's side, the triumphant heralding of her progress by the tremulous pulling of the white pinions upon her jibbooms, the snowstorm at her forefoot, the gilt veins wherever the glory in the clear sky can find a mirror, however dull; the delicacy of spar and rigging against the blue; the spot of colour aloft; the slow darkening of the hollows of her sails as she hauls her wind.

Curious to see are four torpedo-boats going through it like sharks in chase. The churning of the screws makes a bed of foam of their wake; and it is this short length of flying whiteness which one sees before catching sight of the black fire-propelled structures which

raise the sputter. A small head sea meets them, the water flies in blue sheets from their rending stems, and they speed gaily through foam-arches of their own building. Their procession is well-ordered. An exact distance one from another is kept, though travelling at eighteen or twenty miles an hour. They pass like a flight of crows at sunset homeward bound. Their beds of spume shine like stars in the distance when the little fabrics themselves are no longer visible, and were you to catch sight of them on a sudden you would imagine them the bases of water-spouts in the act of forming. Such surprising velocity makes but a poor show of the dull and sullen pace of yonder ugly tank, with bow so cocked and funnel and masts so aslant that she looks to be ashore. She is flying light, and whenever she dips her head two-thirds of her propeller come out of water, and amid the hill of froth you spy the black blades of the screw revolving like the arms of a windmill. She is so gaunt, coarse, hideous in shape, so minute and abundant a violation of every law that governs taste in shipbuilding, that imagination can do nothing with her. Behold that pole-compass forking up to half the height of her funnel; follow the elegant camel-backed line of her length; observe the dainty taste discoverable in the union of slate-colour and red, and in a smoke-stack lozenged on a white ground with yellow and blue. Of what tricks of trade and convulsions of economic mania is this horrid spectacle the outcome? The sunlight streams upon her, the glad water heaves under her, the horizon along which she passes has many enrichments of vaporous tints; but the spirit of beauty withholds its magic—there is nothing in all the spells of sea and sky, of cloud and atmosphere, to brighten with an instant's enchantment that iron ugliness. And, as if to vex the

eye, she passes with besotted slowness. "The good die first." This is a north country—say Hartlepool—boat, that will want three hours to come and go.

The prettiest things are the fleetest. The gazelle is soon out of sight, but the crab has a trick of tarrying. Now comes a foreign ironclad. Her flag is up and down and indistinguishable. How, then, do we know that she is a foreigner? By seeing at once that she is not an English ship. The art of furling, of tricing up a bunt, or squaring to a hair, of hauling taut, and of making a ship carry her furniture, whether in port or at sea, just as a bluejacket carries his clothes, is not every nationality's. I am, indeed, acquainted with but one country that has it in perfection; but modesty will not suffer me to name her. Yet, let me be just. There is something shambling in the walk of yonder ironclad, and a want of finish, of final touches aloft and about her, which to a nautical eye is warrant enough that were her flag to blow out it would not reveal the red cross. Yet I am bound to say that the other day I saw a large English ironclad pass through the Gulls under sail, and that thus equipped—whether because of the dinginess of the canvas, or the disproportion between the hull and the masts, or the abominable set of the foresail, the foot of which hanging over the forestay (as I took it to be, though I could scarcely credit my eyes) gave the whole stretch of canvas something of the look of a tent, she made as ill a figure as could be imagined. Such specimens of unsightliness cannot be helped. You may rig your ironclads to look like ships, but the moment you sheet home and hoist away the delusion is ended. Erect a funnel upon a Symondite and the travestie would not be more consummate.

But the procession viewed from this height goes on,

and one speedily forgets all about armourclads. Here comes a little butter-rig from the West country; a galley-punt from Deal on a hovelling job, flashes and vanishes amid the ridged waters; a concourse of smacks from the North Sea soberly steer for Ramsgate; a whole flight of schooners pass, heading for the Downs. Rotten Row is not more diverting in the height of the season, and all the while the clear sweet wind whistles gaily past the ear, and the line of rocks reverberates the "low melodious thunder" of the surf.

After the long golden silence of the summer the echoes of the cliffs will have been rudely awakened by some very tempestuous winds. For days and weeks the sea may have stretched like quicksilver, reflecting the perfect blue of the English skies in its brilliant and polished surface. The sands will have sparkled with the sheen of gilt from the sun, the cliffs given back the brilliance, and visitors panting in the shadows, in which the thermometer would have registered a temperature of eighty-five degrees, will have thought with jealous yearnings of the simple habits of islanders, who take their pleasures in garbs as plain as a girdle of leaves. But on a sudden the spell is broken; hoarse winds are howling, dark clouds flying, squalls of rain lashing the window-glass, and the vexed sea making the aspect of its heaving plains wintry with the turbulent flinging of snowstorms of its own foam.

Yet a day full of wind should be welcomed by the seaside visitor. People talk of running down to the sea-coast to "get a blow," and their excursion cannot but prove a disappointment in its way if they find themselves landed in a stagnant atmosphere and in view of a sea as slimy as that upon which the bark of the Ancient Mariner lay rotting. The seaside offers no such

suggestion of health as its own strong breezes. Everything is quickened into delicious vitality by the bright and viewless current of air rushing over the sea, full of sounds of laughter and song. There are, indeed, some drawbacks. Fresh, small gales will blow people's hats away, take the curl out of feathers, and temporarily distort the outline of the human form by a singular arrangement of curves. But let the ladies be satisfied to know that their charms are seldom more fascinating than when the artist hands of the winds go to work upon them, shake or disarrange the gold or auburn or raven tresses, or delicately hint at perfections of figure which fashion only too carefully disguises. Again, a strong wind is obnoxious to the photographer who practises his art on the sands or beach. It blows away the screens his comrades hold aloft for the purpose of casting a delicate shadow upon the triple chins of the buxom dame whose grin of expectation at the camera is probably the funniest form of merriment the human countenance is equal to. It blows the open umbrella out of the hand, and sometimes carries it into the sea. It has been known to level Aunt Sally, to capsize the milkman and empty his pails, and to make a balloon of the sweetmeat stall of the old woman who has been reckless enough to protect herself from the heat by attaching a canvas cover to her stand. But, on the other hand, it gives a proud crest to the tall breaker, it makes a kind of living light of the white and moving mass of froth upon the beach, every little gleaming pool amongst the rocks in which children hunt for crabs and shrimps trembles with its own stress of waves, and, as if sea and coast were not lively enough, there are the clouds on high to keep the whole picture alive with their fleeting shadows.

One drawback to the windy day at the seaside is its tendency to bring up rain. A south-wester is notoriously squally, but there is very little dependence to be placed upon any other quarter that the wind may choose to blow from. If a windy day by the seaside is a delight, assuredly a wet day is an intolerable blank. Inland spas provide against a low barometer by winter gardens, sheltered spaces, glass halls in which there is generally something going on in the shape of a concert or a band of music. But those who direct the affairs of our seaside resorts seem to trouble themselves very little in this direction. As a rule, when it is wet by the seaside there is nothing to be done except to read the papers or turn the pages of a novel. Even if people are fortunate enough to procure lodgings directly facing the sea, there is scarcely anything to be seen, for the ocean is shrouded with the slate and grey of rain, and the view through the weeping glass of the windows is in the last degree dismal and depressing. It is even worse still in a back street, with nothing but a bay-window over the way, through which it is possible for the eyesight to penetrate far enough to arrive at the outlines of a family of children fighting and quarrelling. Seaside municipal authorities should awaken to the perception that it very frequently rains during the summer holidays when their towns are crowded, and that it would be a very great convenience to visitors if some resorts were furnished where they could kill the hours in dry clothes and without the need of holding umbrellas over their heads until the clouds broke and the sun or moon shone forth again. "I cannot dine on hardbake," exclaims Charles Dickens ruefully in one of his sketches. It is difficult to pass a holiday in a lodging. The pictures are not usually very attractive.

A man will not commonly find the source of many cheerful reflections in the looking-glass. It is possible sometimes to glean a few items of local information from the servant, but she is generally in a hurry, and her powers of conversation are speedily exhausted. However, most happily for the seaside visitor, the wet day is not the rule. The sea breeze is much more constant. At some coast towns, indeed, wind is nearly always blowing, and the oldest inhabitants are known to view the dead calm as a species of phenomenon. People subject to headaches, or persons suffering from short temper, would not spend a pleasant holiday in such spots. A dull pain in the brow, or the obligation to keep the brim of one's hat securely gripped by both hands, is not conducive to merry-making. Then, again, in towns where it is constantly blowing strong the angles of streets are notoriously sharp. There are many gusty openings. The glazed lamps quiver as though they chattered with their teeth. The boatmen are as warmly clad in the dog-days as at Christmas time, and there is always some sort of disaster happening about a mile out. Of such windy towns the sensitive visitor should beware.

True enjoyment of the seaside is best got out of a variety of weather, wet excepted. In every mood of nature there is a charm to any one who will take the trouble to unriddle it. Even the most trying of all the fine weather days, the stagnant morning and afternoon, when the rocks are so hot that one might almost expect a beefsteak to frizzle upon them, when there is not a stir in the atmosphere, when the ripples roll like dying things upon the beach and expire foamless with a sigh, when eating is not to be thought of without a kind of loathing, and when tobacco-smoke is without

flavour; even in such a loafing, lazy, perspiring day as this beauties may be witnessed which will hereafter serve to give sweetness and light to the stock of holiday-memories which are carried away. It is unpardonable indeed if the charm such a day as this holds should escape a man, for the heat will allow him to do nothing else but look. He will remember afterwards the hot distance of the sea sinuously melting into the rusty blue of the sky; the old collier still as a painting, with patched sails hanging motionless, and the sneaking current throwing a dull trembling light into her sides, and a dark and trickling vein breaking from the short black cable at its point of contact with the surface; the smoke of a distant steamer floating dark as a thunder-cloud, and making a mirage of the heavy, hazy remoteness, through the dusty blueness of which may be faintly witnessed the sulphur-coloured brows of a body of vapour that has been steadfastly hanging in the same spot for hours.

But the sea is melancholy without life, and it is well when the glaring stillness is broken by the voice of the little gale, and when the wide monotony of deep and breathless repose is scattered as by the injection of a living principle. It is the swift, joyous roll of the breaker that makes the sea-bath delicious; it is the movement everywhere that fills and delights the eye. Ashore the trees wave like signals to the sea; windows flash like a discharge of musketry to the alternations of pouring sunshine and veiling cloud. The yellow crops roll in billows, and a spirit of life may be traced in the most distant hills, where the violet shadows and the yellow radiance are sporting. Seawards, boats are flying with the speed of the gulls, whose hoarse salt cries are echoed from the head of one sea to another. Big ships

swing in state along their course, and shine like moons as they float along the blue of the horizon. In the enclosed waters there is a perpetual fountain-like music of ripples upon which the wherries splash and tumble. Nothing is still. Every flag blows merrily; the wind catches up the sound of human voices and laughter, and makes their echoes multitudinous by the broad-casting of its vast wings. A strong breeze at the seaside may have its inconveniences, but it is the one condition of the coast which visitors who desire health and delight for the eye will wish for.

But perhaps the finest seaside effects are to be witnessed in winter, after a long and heavy fall of snow. On the sea-coast, snow is only a little less lovely in its effects than moonshine. It does not quite equal the bland luminary's power of at once chastening and enriching, but it has a quality of surprising the eye with beauties above the magic of the orb's most sparkling beam. A heavy fall will transform leagues and leagues of the seaboard into sheer wonderland. The line of coast runs shining into airy blue distances, as crystalline in aspect as the paring of the new moon hanging high in the midday heavens. One might, indeed, suppose that old winter had changed these islands into a vast territory of ice, to judge from the sheen floating in a misty sort of radiance into the atmosphere from the tracts of sloping dazzle; and the fancy is completed by the glaring ramparts of chalk falling in stark abruptness from the luminous softness on their summits to the yeast of the breaker boiling at their base. There are some parts of the coast which a man might well have need to look at twice before venturing to give a name to them. Inland there will be scarce a snow-picture that is not of dainty grace and tender elegance. The trees

droop under their burden of white blossoms, the meanest little hovel grows in a night into a fairy fabric, an aspect of pensive romance comes upon the land with the noiseless, floating falls of the glistening feathers; but as the coast is approached the sentiment of the picture takes a certain note of wildness, and manifold as is the beauty of the scene, the inland spirit of gentleness has vanished.

There is, indeed, no finer picture imaginable than that of a line of snow-clad cliff, washed by the dark green of the winter sea, with brows and peaks showing ghastly as the light of foam on a moonless night against the dingy sky beyond. Its perfections offer best to the distant eye. The familiar steals out to the approach, but from afar even the well-known points might pass for atmospheric phantasies. It is the only fit perspective for the wintry scene of sullen waters and dark clouds blowing into whiteness as they discharge their storms of snow upon the bleak north-easterly blast. The sands stretch brown and hard to the curl of the olive-coloured surge; the salt of them melts the snow quickly, and what that leaves unfinished the crawling of the tide or the headlong flash of the breaker completes. The wheel of the sun is so low on the horizon that it looks as if it would run foul of the tall mastheads of the great ship yonder, which is rolling along her homeward course over the short bounds of the sea, with the whole weight of the German Ocean in every fling. It is difficult at such a time to conceive that summer will ever visit these cold, white, silent dominions again. The memory of children sporting in the silver of the warm surf, with the high sun showering a golden sparkling upon the soft, yellow sand, is as a recurrence to another form of life altogether as one stands upon the shore, following the cold, bald

streaks of the snow-covered cliffs to where they vanish in pearly blobs and misty films upon the sharp, grey line of the restless waters, and listening to the harsh cry of a gull sailing low directly overhead, and to the multitudinous hissing of the sea racing in an endless procession of breakers, bursting with blasts of noise against the resonant cliffs, or darting aloft in pillars of froth from the sides of the half-tide rocks.

There is nothing in sunlight or in moonshine to qualify in the picture of a winter coast the element of wildness that forms at once its spirit and its beauty. There is no feature or incident of it that does not serve to accentuate this quality. From the late hour of the pink flushing of the east to the early hour of the stormy crimsoning of the west, and on yet through the night, whether black with the shadow of flying clouds or serene and radiant to the icy shining of the planet, there are scores of things to gaze upon, to find delight in, and many to marvel at. Indeed, there is nothing in the summer scene to compare with the winter show of our English seaboard. There is peace in the blue heavens and azure complexion of the hot holiday months, but none now. The ocean may rest as motionless as a sheet of glass, without a heave of swell or stir of ripple to distort for a breath the flakes of starlight that float upon her breast in tiny shafts of silver; there may not be a sound to break the air save the indescribable complaining noise which steals upon the ear, vague as a half-remembered fancy, from the sliding creep of the unfurrowed tide upon the beach. Nothing may be stirring, unless it be the black outline of some little craft stemming to the impulse of her oars down the white path of moonlight upon the water, and slightly swaying as she comes as though she were a fan noise-

lessly vibrated by some hand hidden beneath the surface. Every element of peace seems to be in such a scene as this, yet somehow the true spirit of repose is wanting. The mind is troubled by a sense of conflict, the hush along the white spectral line of coast is scarcely less defiant than would be the noise of the thunder of breakers spurned by its iron foot. The rarity of the still moonlight night upon the sea coasts in winter makes one think of the placid picture as a touch above nature. It is beautiful, but its wildness is preternatural, beyond the inspiration of the fierce gale and the sight of the small green moon flying like a silver cannon-ball from the edge of one dark flying shadow to another. Old winter has a knack of breathing hard even when he slumbers, and one is commonly right in suspecting a malicious device when he hides his hoary beard and holds his icy breath, and postures to the eye, though not to the flesh, as a summer month. It is well to steal a glance at the barometer at such a time. We shall hear him groaning in the chimney anon. It will not be long before his sharp talons are making a drum of every window casement in the house. His roars of laughter will be heard running in thunderous echoes along those silent ranges which, throughout the period of his stillness, have been standing silent, watchful, and ever defiant of his approach. In truth, old winter makes but an ill mummer. He may rend his garment of cloud and cast it aside, set the moon as a jewel in the middle of his forehead, adorn his bald pate with stars, and clothe his formidable figure with the beauty of a still clear night; but, in spite of his waggery, we shall know him, as Falstaff was known, by his beard: and, after a pleasant survey of his ingenious make-up, turn our backs upon him without the least doubt that in a very

short time he will have flung his summer trappings away, and be making the cold white cliffs ring again with his terrible mirth.

If, however, winter be treacherous, he is also very lavish. His panoramas are spacious, and many of them magnificent. He will often, indeed, shroud the ocean and the coast in fog and in flying snow for days; but again and again the curtain is lifted, with such prodigality of presentment behind, that the mind will sometimes be bewildered by the splendid profusion. There will be a dozen different effects of sky scenery in an hour: the rolling cloud surcharged with its own weight bending its ashen burden to the very crests of the leaping billows; a slow passage of storm of snow looking to boil and whirl like volumes of steam as it blows past, and eclipses the wet and slanting beam of pale sunshine that has darted lance-like through some green drift amid the moving bodies of vapour; the weeping shadow over the land gliding onwards, with a perpetual emergence of the flashing snow-streak from its trailing skirts until the whole bright line lies exposed, the whiter, as it would seem, for the cleansing fingers of mist which have passed along it. The winter's breath sharpens and clarifies colour and outline. There are days in high gales often when the atmosphere is so brilliantly clear that the lenses of the telescope scarcely assist the naked eye in defining the tints and shapes of distant objects. A sharper glare appears in the break of the foam and in the scattering of spray than is ever to be seen in summer. Thousands know the sea coast only when the sun stands high, and when the roses are in bloom and the hedgerows leafy. To such as these the spectacle of the winter coast would furnish a memory well worth preserving. The delight might not indeed

linger. Life would undoubtedly bore them after a little, but the novelty of the scene would repay the trouble of taking a glimpse of it. Indeed, by most it would be thought the fairer and the more engaging for lacking almost every element which entices people to the coast in summer-time. The donkey is at rest, the voice of the showman is hushed, the bathing-machine stands high and dry. Nothing seems to survive the entertainments of the summer, but the bath-chair. On the other hand, the breakers are bursting upon the beach with voices they are never known to utter at any other time of the year. The white ramparts of the seaboard look grandly down upon the dark green ocean that rolls at their feet. The snow beautifies the land; but even to the humblest scenery of the coast it will give an aspect that falls little short of grandeur.

AN OCEAN MYSTERY.

It had been a sort of brooding day since dawn; thick, heavy, oppressive, with a light breeze that was like steam for warmth and damp, and a very quiet surface of ocean. Not so much as the head of a cloud had shown anywhere; yet the sky was as dingy as the atmospheric thickness could make it, with the sun in the midst of it like a red-hot warming-pan, and a wake under him in the thick and sluggish water that might have passed for drippings of blazing oil slowly settling. At sundown, when the shadows entered this weather, it fell pitch dark. No man aboard the ship that lay motionless in the heart of it ever remembered a deeper blackness. There could have been nothing in the most stooping and lowering of electric storms to fling a more ebony complexion upon the deep than the night air now held. The wind, too, died out when the evening came down, and the vessel that had been slowly rippling through it all day was brought to a dead stand, with scarce heave enough in her frame to put life into the up-and-down canvas.

The ship was a few degrees south of the equator, an old-fashioned cargo vessel, outward bound to an Australian port, with a purple-faced old Poplar man for a commander. The round-shanked chap, coming on deck after a brief spell below, in company with a bottle of whiskey, stood a minute or two in the companion-way

staring blindly against the blackness; then, after a little, groped over to the mate, one side of whose figure was just visible as he stood between the binnacle and the wheel, by the sheen of the light there touching it.

"Well, well," he exclaimed, sniffing up at the air as though he would smell what he was unable to see; "how is this to end now d'ye think, Mr. Jones? Glass stands high too. A man might marry a negress in this night, and not know her for a side of bacon, let alone the colour. Gor' bless me, colour! Why, you might make a hole in this darkness to lie down in."

He took a view of the compass-card, heard what the mate had to say on the subject of the weather, and, after smoking a pipe, repaired below for a second dram, telling the mate that he would take forty winks on one of the cabin lockers, and that he was to be at once called if there came a change, no matter what form it might take. The mate watched the crimson-faced old gentleman mix himself a "second mate's nip"—he was plain in view through the open skylight—and then the worthy skipper stretched his fat figure along a locker, and his snoring presently arose into the darkness with a sound like to the rushing of water up and down a beach of shingle.

The man at the wheel nodded; there was scarce a stir in the tiller chains; no twitch of the spokes to hint to the fellow to keep his head up. Forward in the blackness the stillness was that of a coffin. In what corners the watch on deck had coiled their bodies away no man could have imagined. The mate paced the deck slowly, often coming to a stand at the rail, lost in wonder at the phenomenal stillness out upon the black shadow of the ocean. There was something soul-subduing in a night of such darkness and stillness as this. It made one walk lightly, as though there were a listening spirit in the

air to be vexed by the rude creak of a boot. It was a time to speak only in whispers, as you'd notice when at long intervals the mate addressed the fellow who was at the wheel, sounding his inquiry but a little above his breath.

This went on till about eleven o'clock, ship, ocean, and sky blended yet into one impenetrable shadow, charged with the mighty pulseless pause, as though the night, with sucked-in breath, hung motionless in expectation.

"Hark! Did you hear that?" cried the mate, suddenly whipping out shrill with the amazement that was in him.

"Ay, sir," answered the man at the helm, in a broad-awake voice. "There it is again."

It was a sound of laughter out on the water off the starboard bow; whether human or not was scarcely to be guessed. The blackness, and then the great ocean solitude out of which it rang, would have put a wild unearthliness into it, even had it been melodious as a girl's laugh; but there was an edge in it that owed nothing to the mystery of the night—an indescribable animal-like harshness, a semblance of human merriment shocking by reason of its mirthlessness and a note running through it as of the mixed crying of the jackal and the hyena.

"Smite me if it didn't sound like some swimming baboon a-hailing of us," cried the helmsman.

"Swimming baboon in your eye," answered the mate. "Some drowned man's ghost, more like, fooling round, maybe, in hope of being laid by a drink."

The laugh again sounded, a sort of unearthly carousing hallooing, like the meaningless bawling of some drunken rascal staggering home in the small hours.

"What the deuce *is* it?" said the mate.

"Ain't that a winking of fire out there where the noise is, sir?" said the helmsman.

The mate peered. "Ay, sure enough," said he; "what is it now? It looks like the sheen of phosphorus to the dipping of an oar. Listen!"

They both bent their ears. The long, demoniacal, blood-chilling laugh came floating off the water to the ship, and then a man cried out suddenly, in the blackness forward, "There's some one hailing of us!"

The mate put his head into the skylight and sang out to the skipper, who rolled off the locker and came on deck. By this time the watch, disturbed in their nap, had uncoiled themselves, and were at the rail. Every man was invisible to his fellow, close together as the sailors hung, but the darkness did not hinder them from speaking, and their voices rose in a sort of grumble, hoarse with wonder, not unmixed with apprehension.

"What is it, Mr. Jones?" asked the captain.

"There's some one out on the water yonder, laughing," answered the mate, "listen, sir—now you have it."

It could scarcely be any longer doubted that the sounds were uttered by a human being. It was a man's lunatic laughter, a senseless howling counterfeit of mirth, and this time it was followed on by an articulate cry, though the fellow was too far off to be intelligible.

"Why, yes; sure enough," cried the captain, "there's some one out there; but what the deuce is he finding to laugh at, and what's his craft?"

He raised his voice.

"Anybody make out what that chap yonder's afloat in?"

"He's heading for us," exclaimed one of the men, "his woice has growed as clear ag'in since first heard."

"It'll be a boat, I allow," exclaimed another man; "fancy I heerd the grind of an oar in thole pins just now, and there's a flash of water at times."

For some minutes there was a dead stillness, while the mate, taking the lamp out of the binnacle, held it steady over the rail. Indeed, it looked as though the sight of the lamp had silenced the fellow. There was nothing to be seen; stare as the men might, they could witness nothing distinguishable in the ink-like void into which their gaze sank blindly, saving the occasional sparkling of fiery water to what was unquestionably the stealthy plying of an oar. Presently the old skipper roared out, "Boat, ahoy! what boat's that?" His voice was echoed in the motionless hidden canvas on high; but no answer was returned from the sea. There was another interval of dead stillness, with a faint sound now and again which suggested that the boat was being very softly and sneakingly sculled. Certainly the scintillation of the oar had vanished, and there was nothing to intimate the existence of the boat saving the sculling sound.

"Confoundedly wonderful all this!" gasped the skipper, in a voice of intense excitement, puffing and blowing with the heat and with the amazement he was full of.

As he said this a peal of mirthless laughter broke from the water, apparently within pistol-shot of the ship's side.

"Ha! ha! ha! Show a light there. Ha! ha! ha! I'm Saint Anthony. Hurrah! boys. Saint Anthony in tow of a pig, by the living thunder! He's brought me a thousand leagues. Hurrah! hurrah! Ha! ha! ha!"

The dreadful laugh died out.

"There's only one way of dealing with this," cried the mate.

He dived into the cabin, was absent a minute, and then returned with a port-fire, which he exploded over the side. Out gushed the fountain of green flame, tincturing a broad area of the water with a frightful radiance, and flashing up within biscuit-toss the shape of what was apparently a ship's quarter-boat, black, with the tall, seemingly half-naked figure of a man erect on a midship thwart, with both hands held high, in the posture of one who leaps as he falls with a shot in his heart. It was a picture not to be expressed in writing; the wild colouring of the port-fire made an unimaginable vision of it; and then again there was the sudden ghastly brightening out of the wild sight from the black canvas in which it had lain buried.

"Saint Anthony, I tell ye, men! Saint Anthony, ha, ha, ha!" cried the half-nude creature, flourishing his arms as if in ecstasy at the sight of the green spout of flame. "Ho! 'tis a good thing to be a saint, though! Alone, alone—alone, alone! I'm the Sovereign of the Seas, and Saint Anthony too. Hurrah, boys. Ha! ha! ha!"

The port-fire went out, and the blackness rolled down again dark upon the dazzle in the men's eyes.

"A mad sailor, sir," cried the mate, "some shipwrecked survivor with his brain gone. Great God! how horrible."

"Lord, if one could but see!" exclaimed the captain; "we must have him aboard, though. Aft here, some of you; get a boat lowered, and secure that poor fellow."

"Ha! ha! ha!" sounded out of the darkness. "I'm monarch of the night, I tell ye. I'm Saint Anthony, too, my livelies. Hurrah! Nor'-nor' west; that's the course,

boys. Ha! ha! ha!" and the flash of water, accompanied by a grinding sound, intimated that the unhappy creature was sculling away from the ship.

The sailors came tumbling aft, and, despite the blackness, in a few minutes a boat was in the water with four men in her, and the chief mate in the stern sheets groping to hang the rudder. "Shove off—give way!" At the same moment a large globular lantern was run aloft by the signal halliards to the mizen peak, and other lights held along the ship's side. The moment the water was flashed up by the four oars of the men the madman, if such, indeed, he were, broke into a long mocking laugh, and then fell silent whilst he sculled with might and main. His fifty fathoms' start would give him but a poor chance against four men. The boat swept up to him rapidly, guided by the sparkling of the water about his oar, but on a sudden this brilliance vanished; they could hear the oar flung furiously down, followed by a derisive yell, that came to the pursuers' ears with the shock and fear of a shriek of anguish, and by the splash of the fellow's body as he flung himself overboard.

"'Vast rowing!"

The boat floated to the other, the five men holding their breath whilst they sent their glances over the black profound in search of a single scintillation to indicate the whereabouts of the man drowning or swimming; but no break of light was anywhere visible. They softly rowed here and there, and then, catching hold of the boat, they towed her to the ship's side, and made her fast for examination by daybreak.

By the morning's light the captain and mate examined her and found her an ordinary ship's boat with the name, *Martha Williams*, painted in small black letters

on her stern; a Scotch cap, a sailor's shirt and jacket, a belt, and sheath knife were found in her, also an empty breaker, dry and resonant with the heat, and the half of a ship's biscuit, mouldy and vermin-eaten. It was afterwards ascertained that the *Martha Williams* was a missing ship, and supposed to have foundered on a voyage to the Thames from Callao.

THE OLD NAVAL SEA-SONG.

THERE are two kinds of sea-songs, those which are sung at concerts and in drawing-rooms, and sometimes, but not very often, at sea, and those which are never heard off shipboard. The latter have obtained, in this age, the name of "chanty," a term which I do not recollect ever having heard when I was following the life. It is obviously manufactured out of the French verb, and there is a longshore twang about it which cannot sound very relishably upon the elderly nautical ear. This sort of song is designed to lighten and assist the sailor's toil. It is an air that enables a number of men pulling upon a rope to regulate their combined exertions. It is also a song for sailors to sing as they tramp round a capstan and heave upon a windlass. Of the melodies of many of them it is difficult to trace the paternity. Some are so engaging that they might well be regarded as the compositions of musicians of genius, who wrote them with little suspicion of the final uses to which they would be put. Why their destination, having been sung perhaps at the harpsichord and the guitar by ladies and gentlemen, should be the forecastle; why being appropriated by the sailor they should be so peculiarly his, that no one else ever dreams of singing them, there is no use in attempting to guess. The reader will not require me to tell him that the marine working songs

are to be heard only in the Merchant Service. In a ship of war the uproar caused by the hoarse bawling of half a dozen gangs of men scattered about the decks would be intolerable, nor could the working song be of service to the blue-jacket, who is quite numerous enough to manage without it. It was always so, indeed; a frigate getting under weigh would flash into canvas in a breath; sails were sheeted home, yards hoisted, jibs and staysails run up, and the anchor tripped as though the complicated mechanism were influenced by a single controlling power producing simultaneously a hundred different effects. There were men enough to do everything, and all at once; but the ship's company of the merchantman was always too few for her. A mercantile sailor is expected to do the work of two, and at a pinch of three, and even four. When one job is done he has to spring to another. There are "stations" indeed in such manœuvres as tacking or wearing; but when, for instance, it comes to shortening sail in a hurry, or when the necessity arises for a sudden call for all hands, the merchant sailor lays hold of the first rope it is necessary to drag on, and when he has "belayed" it, he is expected to fling himself upon the next rope that has to be pulled. Here we have the secret of the usefulness of the working song. Let the words be what they will, the melody animates the seaman with spirit and he pulls with a will; it helps him to keep time too, so that not so much as an ounce of the united weight of the hauling and bawling fellows misses of its use on the tackle they drag at. I have known seamen at work on some job that required a deal of heavy and sustained pulling, to labour as if all heart had gone out of them whilst one of the gang tried song after song; the mate meanwhile standing by and encouraging them with the familiar

official rhetoric; till on a sudden an air has been struck up that acted as if by magic. The men not only found their own strength, every fellow became as good as two. This, I believe, will be the experience of most merchant sailors.

There are tunes to fit every kind of work on board ship; short cheerful melodies for jobs soon accomplished or over which a captain would not allow time to be wasted in singing (for I am bound to say that the disposition of a sailor is to make a very great deal of song go to the smallest possible amount of pull), such as hauling out a bowline, mastheading one of the lighter yards, or boarding a tack. Other working choruses, again, are as long as a ship's cable. These are sung at the capstan or at the windlass, when the intervals between the starting of the solo and the coming in of the chorus do not hinder the work an instant. It would be interesting to know when and by whom the working song was first introduced into the British Merchant Service. In old books of voyages no reference whatever is made to it. There is not a sentence in the collections from Hakluyt down to Burney to indicate that when the early sailors pushed at handspikes or dragged upon the rigging they animated their labours with songs and choruses. I have some acquaintance with the volumes of Shelvocke, Funnell, and other marine writers of the last century, but though many of them, such as Ringrose, Dampier, Cooke, Snelgrave, and particularly Woodes Rogers, enter very closely into the details of the shipboard work of their time, they are to a man silent on this question of singing. It is for this reason that I would attribute the origin of the practice to the Americans. If most of the forecastle melodies still current at sea be not the compo-

sition of Yankees, the words, at all events, are sufficiently tinctured by American sentiment to render my conjecture plausible. The titles of many of these working songs have a strong flavour of Boston and New York about them. "Across the Western Ocean," "The Plains of Mexico," "Run, let the Bulljine run!" "Bound to the Rio Grande," these and many more which I cannot immediately recollect betray to my mind a trans-Atlantic inspiration. "Heave to the Girls," "Cheerly, Men," "A dandy ship and a dandy crew," "Tally hi ho! You know," "Hurrah! hurrah! my hearty bullies," and scores more of a like kind, all of them working songs never to be heard off the decks of a ship, are racy in air and words of the soil of the States.

The other kind of songs—the songs of Charles and Thomas Dibdin, Shield, Arnold, Henry Russell, Arne, Boyce, etc., are of a very different order. The working song is often at best but little more than unintelligible doggerel. It is the sailor's trick to improvise as he goes along, and rhyme and reason are entirely subordinate to the obligation of shouting out something. But the sea-song, as landsmen understand the term, is accepted as a composition of meaning and even of poetry. At long intervals it is so. There is no lyric in the English language comparable to "Ye Mariners of England," and "The Battle of the Baltic." "Cease, rude Boreas," again, commonly attributed to George Alexander Stevens, though I believe it was written by William Falconer, the author of "The Shipwreck," is a fine stirring poem, full of sailors' weather and salt spray and the thunder of the gale. But the average British sea-song, whether old or new, ranks low as a sample of poetry. Dibdin is happiest when he is least technical. There is a pathos in "Tom Bowling" that needs not the

accentuation of its exquisite air to appeal to us. But when he is particularly nautical every sailor will, I think, admit that he is very much at sea indeed. One reason why the landsman's nautical song finds but little favour among mariners is, I think, because he is seldom successful in catching the true maritime spirit and flavour. It is idle to write about wet sheets and flowing seas unless you know what they mean. A man must serve a long apprenticeship to the ocean to master the shades and significations of the nomenclature of the marine; and he must serve for a longer period yet to gather the import of the subtle professional intellectual conditions which go to the creation of the sea mind. The employment of marine technicalities by a poet to whom they are unintelligible, may result in what looks like a sea-song, but no true sailor will ever care to sing it; nor will the bard find himself better recommended to the seaman by references to what, even in this age, is accepted as the traditional character of the tar. Another reason why Jack does not take kindly to the landsman's sea-songs is perhaps he gets so much of the ocean in fact, that he wants no more of it in fiction. A true thing he will relish, and sing, and talk of, no matter how deep in the heart of the country it was produced, nor how pastoral the genius of its author; but he turns wearily from descriptions of gallant ships and rustling sails, of dripping prows and boatswains' calls, of carousals on shore, of sweethearts and wives, of Billy Crosstree and Tommy Marlinespike. My own experience is that sailors when they get a chance to sing at sea choose the current sentimental ditties of the theatre and the music hall. I dare say that "Two Lovely Black Eyes" is sung now on the ocean by men who never heard of "Tom Tough" or "All in the Downs." Dana's

old seaman of 1834 was true of my time—twenty years ago; and doubtless he would stand as a type of scores of mariners yet living: "I never shall forget," he says, "hearing an old salt who had broken his voice by hard drinking on shore, and bellowing from the masthead in a hundred north-westers, singing—with all manner of ungovernable trills and quavers, in the high notes breaking into a rough falsetto, and in the low ones growling along like the dying away of the boatswain's 'All hands ahoy' down the hatchway—'Oh no, we never mention him'—

"'Perhaps like me he struggles with
Each feeling of regret:
But if he's loved as I have loved
He never can forget!'

The last line he roared out at the top of his voice, breaking each word into a half a dozen syllables. This was very popular, and Jack was called on every night to give them his sentimental song. No one called for it more loudly than I, for the complete absurdity of the execution and the sailor's perfect satisfaction in it were ludicrous beyond measure."

When I went to sea as a little midshipman, having some small ear for music, though I did not then and still do not, know my notes, I took with me a sort of accordion that had keys like a pianoforte, and this I would carry on to the forecastle on a fine quiet evening and play to the men and accompany them in their singing, and I took notice that the songs they liked best, indeed they cared for no others, were of the strictly sentimental kind, such as, "Ever of thee," "Here's a fair good night to thee, love," "I'd be a butterfly," and so on. We may take it I think that the decline of the popularity at sea of the Dibdin school of song is due to the long peace which this country has enjoyed, or at all

events to the long intervals which have elapsed between naval engagements since Waterloo. Prior to that decisive action the country was almost incessantly at war. Our home waters were covered with British cruisers, and reports of single and general actions were arriving weekly, I had almost said daily, from half the oceans of the globe. The pig-tailed mariner was a great hero then. The Incledons and Brahams were warbling his praises in very pretty music. Much was made of his saucy frigate, of the towering liner and the little ten-gun "pelter," of Hawke and Howe and Keppel; and much too of Mounseer's cowardice. But when those war-times came to an end there was little left in the shape of maritime marvels for the contemporary bard to express in verse. Algiers, Navarino, and so down to the Crimea, were too brief for inspiration. The traditional feats grew obscure in the haze of time, and Jack got tired of the old rollicking celebrations. Steam and iron confirmed the indifference induced by spells of inactivity. Further, the old portraits ceased to resemble the modern sailor. The pigtail had been hove overboard; wooden legs were no longer plentiful; coffee and cocoa were replacing the can of grog. Outside the old machinery of moonlight and shivering topsails, there was nothing definite to write about. Indeed, long before the Crimean war, Jack had revolted against all attempts to represent him as a lion-hearted man with a face discoloured by grog-pimples, a hat jauntily fixed upon "nine hairs," and feet squeezed into little dancing pumps; and since he could not procure anything written about himself that was worth singing, he addressed his mind to ditties in which no reference whatever was made to his calling.

But throughout the last century, and during the

first fifteen or twenty years of this, the sea-song was popular, in proportion as the words were good and the music brisk, with our fighting crews, and the old wooden fabrics resounded the thunder of lungs of hurricane power roaring out choruses glorifying Britannia's might and the heroism of the hardy salts. The creation of this type of ocean ballad is intimately associated with the honoured name of Charles Dibdin; but there were other writers before him, the originators of a school of which he is the most illustrious example, whose compositions, there is every reason to believe, proved as heartening and as animating in their day as ever did the best of poor Tom Bowling's in his. It is a literature hard to get at. Only the very choicest specimens have been suffered to survive in the existing collections. Nearly all the sea-songs included in the lists I have examined are by Dibdin or his contemporaries. Some excellent examples, such as, "All's Well," "The Snug Little Island," "When Vulcan forged the bolts of Jove," were the productions of Dibdin's son. I doubt not there are many nautical ballads of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to be met with by any one with sufficient leisure and diligence to engage in such a search. A collection of the kind would usefully supplement our naval histories, and prove a work of enduring interest to the country at large, and more particularly to the British marine. There is, indeed, something peculiarly engaging in the nautical lyric in which a contemporaneous hand has celebrated the mighty deeds of the bold admiral or captain of a hundred or two hundred years ago. It is a sort of rough verse to transform the past into an arras; the imagination quickens the figures and the whole tapestry glows into life upon the vision of the mind. The old ship rises before us straining

at her hempen cables or rolling and plunging to the gale under canvas the fashion of whose cut is as dead and gone as the names by which they were known. You see her castellated stern, her black or yellow sides bristling with guns under the deep waist, and the many quaintnesses of her apparel of sails and streamers. The admiral, with a face like the north-west moon, clad in the attire of the sea-brave of the Stuarts or of the first George, stumps the poop-royal, with a perspective-glass under his arm, watching the chase ahead, a squadron of flying Frenchmen, or Dutchmen, or Spaniards, occasionally sending a glance over the quarter where his consorts of the Union Jack are frothing and rolling along in a huddle of dingy canvas. I never read the song called "Admiral Benbow," without the vision rising before me of the whole of that sea dog's stern and melancholy business with Du Casse. There is not a line of description in it, of the kind, I mean, to help the imagination; nevertheless the verse has a magic of its own, every sentence conjures up a radiant canvas:—

"ADMIRAL BENBOW.

"Come all ye sailors bold,
Lend an ear, lend an ear;
Come, all ye sailors bold,
Lend an ear.
It's of our admiral's fame,
Brave Benbow call'd by name,
How he fought upon the main,
You shall hear, you shall hear.

"Brave Benbow he set sail,
For to fight, for to fight;
Brave Benbow he set sail,
For to fight.

Brave Benbow he set sail,
With a fine and pleasant gale,
But his captains they turn'd tail,
In a fright, in a fright.

"Says Kirby unto Hood,
'I will run, I will run;'
Says Kirby unto Hood,
'I will run.
I value not disgrace,
Nor the losing of my place,
My enemies I'll not face.
With a gun, with a gun.'

"'Twas the *Ruby* and *Noah's Ark*,
Taught the French, taught the French;
'Twas the *Ruby* and *Noah's Ark*,
Taught the French.
And there was ten in all,
Poor souls, they fought them all,
They valu'd them not at all,
Nor their noise, nor their noise.

"Unfortunate it was,
By chain shot, by chain shot;
Unfortunate it was,
By chain shot,
Our admiral lost his legs,
Unto his men he begs:
'Fight on, brave boys,' he says,
''Tis my lot, 'tis my lot.'"

There is a true ocean swing in this rhythm. Over many a steaming bowl, by the light of many an oscillating slush lamp, and to the wagging of more pig-tails than I should like to count, have these stirring verses been roared out. Poor Benbow loses his legs. "'Tis my lot, 'tis my lot!" he says, and the poet proceeds:—

"While the surgeon dress'd his wound,
How he cried, how he cried;
While the surgeon dress'd his wound,
How he cried,

'Let my cradle now in haste
On the quarter-deck be plac'd,
That my enemies I may face
Till I'm dead, till I'm dead.'

"And there brave Benbow lay,
Crying out, crying out;
And there brave Benbow lay,
Crying out, boys,
'Let us tack about once more,
We'll drive them to their shore,
We value not half a score,
Nor their noise, nor their noise!'"

Benbow was one of those seamen about whom the English sailor of his and of succeeding days could never weary of singing. "Sir," wrote Du Casse to him, "I had little hopes, on Monday last, but to have supp'd in your cabbin; but it pleased God to order it otherwise. I am thankful for it. As for those cowardly captains who deserted you, hang them up, for, by ——, they deserve it!" The old Jacks used to sing another fine song about him:—

"Oh, we sailed to Virginia,
And from thence to Fial;
Oh, we water'd our shipping,
And so we weighed all:
Being in view of the sea, boys,
Seven sail we did espy;
Oh, we hoisted our topsails,
And sailed speedily."

The recurrent "Oh!" in the seven verses which form the song is what Tom Cringle would call exceedingly fine. It expresses the prefatory howl with which Jack delights to regale his hearers before plunging into the substance of the music and the verse:—

"Oh, we drew up our squadron
In a very nice line,
And we fought them courageously
For near four hours' time;

But the day being spent,
And the night coming on,
Oh, we let them alone
Until the next morn."

The poet's enthusiasm, however, hurries him into a little blunder:—

"Oh, the very next morning
By the break of the day,
Oh, we hoisted our topsails,
And so we bore away;
We bore down to Port Royal,
Where the people flocked much,
To see brave Admiral Benbow
Carried to Kingston Town Church."

From this it might be inferred that the admiral died at sea and was buried at Port Royal; the truth being that he lived nearly a month after the arrival of his ship at Jamaica. Sometimes, but not very often, the old sea-song writer was sarcastic. The school of Dibdin was full of enthusiasm. Everything English is above praise, everything French beneath contempt. Marryat, whose sea-lyrics, all admirable of their kind, though they have the uncommon fault of being too few, hinted to the country in swinging verse that it was not impossible for a British naval captain to be neither a hero nor a gentleman. But, then, to be sure, Marryat wrote in comparatively peaceful times, when the perpetuation of the drunken, swaggering, roaring patriotism of the Dibdinite mariner could serve no immediate end. There were poets, however, long previous to Marryat, much earlier indeed than Dibdin, who could forget their warlike enthusiasm sufficiently to tell a saucy truth in a frisky stanza or two. In a word, they could find stomach enough for the assumption of a satirical countenance.

Here is a stroke in this way, and few songs of the kind were ever more heartily sung:

BOLD BENJAMIN.

"Captain Edwards is gone to sea,
High sir, ho sir,
With a jovial ship's company,
On board the *Bold Benjamin*, O.

"He carried out five hundred men,
High sir, ho sir,
And brought home but thirty-one,
On board the *Bold Benjamin*, O.

"When they came to Blackwall,
High sir, ho sir,
Men, women, and children all
Aloud did they call,
'Here comes the *Bold Benjamin*, O.'

"There was mothers weeping for their sons,
High sir, ho sir,
Widows for loss of husbands,
On board the *Bold Benjamin*, O."

A song about Admiral Byng is less covert. The poet could plead justification, and wrote as if he knew that he had the world with him. It would seem that this amiable composition was published whilst Byng was awaiting his trial. I have only space to quote the last verse:—

"For behaving so well on the ocean,
At least he deserves a *string*,
And if he should sue for promotion,
I hope they will give him his swing.
Swing, swing, O rare Admiral Byng."

This song seems to have been a bid for the popularity of the tavern rather than for that of the forecastle. There is no flavour of the sea in it. Moreover, it is not probable that the sailor would take very kindly to a ditty that represented his flag as disgraced. It is the

custom to speak of Dibdin as the originator of the heave-ho, rum-coloured, grog-soaked, lively hearty, who on stepping ashore from his frigate, which has just arrived with a rich prize in tow, instantly flies to Nancy and the bowl. To those who have not carried their inquiries in this direction further than Dibdin, there is, indeed, quite enough of drink and of grinning through horse-collars in his compositions to justify the notion that the jovial reeling salt found his earliest metrical and melodious interpretation in the works of his composer. The drink to be discovered in Dibdin's songs would make a sea large enough for several combined fleets of that age to have floated on. The sailor had nothing to do but to sing in all weathers, beat the French, and drink the "swizzy." Inspired by the wishes of Mr. Pitt, it was Dibdin's business to paint the sea-life in captivating colours. His "properties" were not numerous: lovely Sue, the jorum of grog, pockets full of prize money, the fiddle, the song, and the dance—the machinery of allurement scarcely went farther. These temptations, it is quite possible, conveyed in plain verse and vehicled by many pleasing tunes, were useful auxiliaries to the labours of the press-gang; but they also helped to confirm many odd notions of the sailor's character which had long been floating loose on the surface of public opinion. In reality, Dibdin merely helped onwards some old queer prejudices and superstitions. The Pipeses, and Hatchways, and Trunnions not only drank as heavily as the Wapping heroes of Dibdin's muse; they were out and away their superiors as artists in bad language. In truth, if we are to believe the old novelists and the playwrights from Beaumont and Fletcher down to John O'Keeffe, the men who fought and bled for this country at sea, and who hoisted her as a

nation to the world's masthead, were the most hardened race of ruffians, bullies, swearers, and drunkards that ever hiccoughed out blasphemies under the stars. This is the character of the noble fellows who fought under Hawkins, Shovel, Hawke, Rodney, Nelson, Collingwood, as we find it in the old sea-song. Were even the traditions half true, there would have been but little done by our sailors for Dibdin and the other song-writers to sing about! Here is a stanza embodying the wishes of a tarpaulin of the reign of George II.:

"Let there be sailors to carry me,
Let them be dreadfully drunk;
And as they're a-going to bury me,
Let them fall down with my trunk:

"Let there be no fighting nor sobbing,
But one single favour I crave—
Take me up in my tarpaulin jacket,
And fiddle and dance to my grave."

It is in such delectable doggerel as this that we must seek for the origin of the land-going idea of the sailor, a libellous idea whose influence is to be witnessed in the nautical play, ballad, and novel of the current hour. Nevertheless, many of the old sea-songs, particularly those in which there is no reference to grog and to pretty Sukey, are full of a true and stirring spirit. They seem as if jotted down in a moment of inspiration in the heat of the conflict, when the air was dark with the smoke of battle and when the cannons' roar rolled in thunder through the gloom. Such is "Bold Sawyer," with its brisk opening invitation:

"BOLD SAWYER.

"Come, all ye jolly sailors, with courage stout and bold,
Come, enter with bold Sawyer, he'll cloathe you all in gold,
Repair on board the old *Nassau*,
As fine a ship as e'er you saw,

We'll make the French to stand in awe,
She's manned with British boys.

"Commodore Keppel with his good design,
Commanded the squadron, five sail of the line,
The *Prince Edward* of forty guns,
The *Firedrake* and *Furnace* bombs.
To take Goree, it must be done,
By true English boys.

"The twenty-ninth of October from Spithead we set sail,
Kind Neptune convey'd us with a sweet and pleasant gale.
So steering on the Barbary shore,
Distance about ten leagues or more,
The wind at west aloud did roar,
Stand by, ye British boys!

So steering on the lee shore until the break of day,
We spy'd a lofty sail on the Barbary shore to lay,
In great distress she seem'd to be,
Her guns all overboard threw she,
Which proved the *Litchfield* for to be,
With all her British boys.

"The wind blowing hard we could give them no relief,
A stretching on the lee shore we touch'd at Teneriff;
So watering the ships at Santa Cruz,
Taking good wine for our ships use,
We sold our cloaths good wine to booze,
Like brave British boys.

"Our ship being water'd, and plenty of good wine,
We hoisted our topsails, and cross'd the tropic's line,
The wind at west, the leading gale,
Our gallant ship did sweetly sail,
Steady along, she ne'er will fail,
With all her British boys.

"Steady aport! Don't bring her by the lee!
Yonder is the flagstaff of Goree I do see,
We brought the city within fight,
Anchor'd in Goree bay that night,
Clear'd our ships ready to fight,
Like brave British boys.

"Early the next morning the *Prince Edward* of forty guns
Was station'd off the island, to cover our two bombs;
With all her jovial fighting men,
The drums did beat, to quarters stand,
Like brave British boys.

"We sailed up to the batteries, as close as we could lay,
Our guns from the top and poop aloud did play,
Which made the French to cry, "Morblue!
Diabel! what shall we do?
Here comes bold Sawyer, and all his crew,
They're all British boys.

"Then follow'd by the *Dunkirk* and *Torbay*,
The guns aloud did rattle, and the shells aloud did play,
Which made the French their batteries shun,
And from their trenches for to run,
The flag was struck, the fight was done,
O huzza! my British boys.

"The *Nassau*, with *Dunkirk*, and *Torbay* of renown,
Three as fine vessels as belong unto the crown;
The only ships that fought so free,
In taking of the Isle of Goree,
They are all British boys.

"Boast not of Frenchmen, nor yet of Maclome,
Sawyer's as big a hero as ever yet was known,
Whilst the shot around him did flee,
In engaging twice the Isle Goree,
As valiant men as ever you see,
They are all British boys.

"Here's a health to King George our Sovereign Majesty,
Likewise to bold Sawyer, that fought the French so free.
Our officers and all our crew,
Are valiant men as e'er you knew,
So here's a health to all true blue,
My brave British boys."

There is a strong healthy pulse, too, in such a song as the "*London* Man-of-War."

"THE *LONDON* MAN-OF-WAR.

"THE fourteenth day of August in Plymouth Sound we lay,
On board the *Common Order* we could no longer stay,
As on the coast of Ireland, our orders did run so,
It was to cruise, but ne'er refuse, when we met with our proud foe.

"We had not sailëd many leagues before we did espy
A lofty sail to the windward come bearing down so nigh;
They hailëd us in French, my boys, and ask'd from whence we came,
Our answer was 'From Liverpool, and the *London* is our name.'

"'If you're the *London* man-of-war, as I suppose you be,
We are the *Royal Delamarque*, that you shall quickly see:
'Tis, boys, haul up your courses! and let your ship lay to,
Your men so stout, your boats let out, or else we will sink you.'

"The first broadside we gave to them we struck them with such wonder,
Their lofty yards and topmasts came rattling down like thunder.
'That's very well! that's very well!' our captain he did say;
'That's very well!' says our commodore, 'we'll show 'em British play.'

"The next broadside we gave to them, so hot our shot did fly,
We shot away their ensign-staff, and down their colours lie:
'That's very well! that's very well!' our captain he did say,
'Come, draw your swords and pistols load, for we'll board without delay.'

"So now we've taken the *Delamarque*, and safe in Plymouth Sound,
But when we do cast anchor we'll fire our guns all round;
Here's a health unto the captain, and all such warlike souls,
To him let's drink, but never shrink, over full flowing bowls."

For "The Bold Salamander," "Blow, Boreas, blow," and others whose titles it would be idle to quote, I have no space. I doubt whether we shall ever again have sea-songs of the old pattern. It is not perhaps that the sentiment of the age is opposed to them, though the old Blackwall and Erith tomfoolery of drink, fiddling, and the like, would not perhaps be found very suitable to the

tastes of the day; the difficulty lies in the dearth of nautical topics. For my part, I cannot understand what kind of opportunities the naval war of the future is to supply the nautical song writer with. There is nothing poetical in the armourclad, nothing inspiring. A ship swelling like a cloud upon the sea, with cabin windows flashing, an admiral in a cocked hat walking the quarter-gallery, the white hammock line of the vessel's towering defences dotted with the red coats of marines, the blue surge breaking in sheets of silver against the golden brightness of the metal sheathing, pretty little midship-men in lace and dirks strutting the almond-white quarter-deck, groups of bronzed and brawny sailors at work with junks of tobacco standing high under their cheekbones—here were materials to colour the poetaster's meekest jingle; and to put a free and windy and briny life of their own into the most halting sing-song that ever teased the ear. There were twenty different types of ships to write about; from that cloud-like pyramid, the four-decker, giving tongues of flame and voices of thunder to the meaning and the message of the nation, down to the little cutter that, with stern and fore-chaser only, heightened the brightness of the annals with many a sparkling passage. There were a thousand colours, and all were magical. But marine romance is now as flat as though the machinery with which the iron plate is rolled out had passed over it. What can there be of seamanship for the poet to sing of when the genius of the chase lies in the revolutions of the engines and in an amidship helm? There is no weather-gage now to manœuvre for. It matters not to a steamer how the wind sits. Jack, when he works his gun, will keep his shirt on, stand inside a metal tower, and let fly at an enemy two leagues distant. His

ship is as ugly as the dugong. It is not in poetic art to idealize her. A roaring old sea-song of the type of the "Saucy Arethusa," or "Stand to your guns, my hearts of oak," would ring with but a melancholy note through the iron interior of the armourclad. Indeed, the extinction of the naval sailing-ship is of necessity the extinction of the naval sea-song as we understand the expression. The poet must go to the merchant service now if he wants marine suggestions. Yet the sailor need not complain. There is a large old-fashioned literature in marine ballads to choose from whenever he feels disposed to tune up his pipes, and he will also hold that until the nautical song writer resolves to quit the mouldy and impure traditions of caricature, the less he says about Jack the better.*

* Reprinted from *Longman's Magazine*.

AN OLD SHIPWRIGHT.

In the days of Queen Anne a shipwright wrote a book upon his art. Of his qualification for such an undertaking one gets a good idea from what he says in his preface: "'Tis the product of thirty-two years' study and experience; for 'tis very well known that I have been so long imploy'd in her Majesty's service and that of her Royal predecessors; so that I may say I was in a manner a born seaman, as most of my ancestors were. My grandfather was foreman to the shipwrights in her Majesty's yard at Deptford thirty years; my uncle, Mr. Bagwell, died master builder of her Majesty's yard at Portsmouth; my father, and several of my relations were master carpenters in the Royal Navy, and I myself have had the honour to act in the quality of master carpenter of three of her Majesty's ships, and for fifteen years last past have served her Majesty in the inspection and direction of the work done by part of the shipwrights at Portsmouth." So that posterity should be very well satisfied that when this old Queen Anne man sat down to relate to the public of his day all that he could tell about his particular business he exactly knew what he was going to write about. It is a book that would have delighted Charles Lamb, had that author had any relish for marine archaisms and the sort of nautical literary

flavour that sets one thinking of the smell of a bit of green timber fished up out of a wreck that has been for a century under water. It is full of intoxicated-looking woodcuts, which defy the most painstaking inspection, and the language throughout is amusingly quaint with simplicity of mind and gravely-aired knowledge—of a most childlike aspect, as one may suppose, to us of this scientific generation.

The pleasure I found in reading this old book was the sort of pleasure any man proud of our maritime traditions, and a lover of what is early and distant in the sailor's calling, would take in looking over a very old ship—a vessel built say in Queen Anne's reign—rigged as craft then were, and manned by seamen capable of telling the visitor the names which ropes and sails and rigging had, in the days when Swift was wrecking Gulliver, and when Dampier was gaining in the South Seas those wonderful experiences which Defoe was afterwards to profit from in dealing with the surprising adventures of such gentlemen as Colonel Jack and Captain Singleton. There is no ship in this age anywhere to be found that was built and rigged and equipped in the days of Queen Anne; but an old author, after the pattern of the shipwright I am dealing with, talking to one out of a book, comes very near to reconstructing such a craft; and, as a guide, he is bound to be cleverer and livelier than any modern could prove, even if there was a real Queen Anne ship to look at, because he not only appears before us habited in the garb of an artisan who worked scores and scores of years ago in her Majesty's yards, but can show us hands hardened with the tree-nails he has driven into many a vanished fabric, and with the saws with which he has cut through the grain of many a noble piece of hearty English oak.

The history of shipbuilding in this country is the history of England. It was the ringing echo of the shipwright's hammer that gave, as it still gives, to "Rule Britannia" its true melody. But how many of us, I wonder, in looking at a fine modern sailing ship, think of her as the outcome of centuries of slow experimental toil? Meet such a craft on the high seas, under full sail; you realize, then, the superb taste that has gone to the creation of that fabric, sentient with the spirit of the deep; you remark square upon square of canvas rising and dwindling as the white spaces mount, and your heart salutes the gracefulest object in the world. See the jibs swelling from the jibbooms in beautiful curves to the mastheads, the courses, and topsails, and topgallantsails rounding like a woman's bosom on either side the tension of the buntlines, the royals and skysails shining like stars up in the dark blue air; note the perfect symmetry of every yard and every space of canvas, the judgment exhibited in every shroud, stay and backstay, the grand dominating pointing of the bowsprit and jibbooms, the moulded sides along which the snow-white froth is rushing; then consider the ease with which this large and lovely fabric is rendered obedient, how by the braces the yards may be trimmed till the leaning vessel slides aslant the wind like a gull in the eye of a gale. We know what painters think of such a picture; we know how the dullest eye will brighten to such a sight; but to appreciate all that it means we must go a long, long way back, into times anterior to periwigs, when the spirit of adventure was a kind of madness, and when all the mechanical brains of the nation were planning and devising ocean vehicles for the navigation of the unmeasured seas behind whose blue girdle lay the fairylands of pearl and gold and gems.

To encounter a Queen Anne's shipwright is like halting in a half-way house. My old author's grandfather, "who was foreman to the shipwrights in her Majesty's yard at Deptford thirty years," would, had he been alive when his grandson in his old age was writing his book on shipbuilding, have doubtless wandered about the yards with mouth wide open with wonder at the things he saw, whilst he compared them with the things which he remembered. No doubt he would see plenty to find fault with. One can picture him shaking a withered face over the design of a ship whose length was to be actually three times that of her beam; and he might possibly resent the regular use of the top-gallant sail as an innovation that would account for many a missing craft. But he could not but be astonished at such ambitious progress as reckoned the construction of a "greate shippe" of four hundred tons nothing to excite marvel: and he might find something to respect, perhaps, in the taste that restricted the height of the poop to about twice that of the forecastle. Yet it must be admitted that this old grandfather would not have found that much advance had been made in respect of beauty, symmetry, and convenience during the time that he had flourished. Even his grandson would have had to go on living pretty nearly another century from the date of his book to understand that the British shipwright had been wofully lacking in good taste, not only during his own, but during his grandfather's and great-grandfather's time. Yet let these ancient workmen have due honour. Bit by bit they had progressed, adding here, narrowing there, inventing marine terms, which can perish only with the language; and their claim as the creators of the stateliest sailing ship that at the present day leaves the Mersey or the

Thames is tenfold larger than can be advanced by the actual builder of the vessel. This is the consideration that makes one read such a book as this with the same deep interest that one would find in the inspection of a completely rigged ship of that age. It is the stateliness of the full-branched oak that gives the sapling its fascination.

In going over a vessel two hundred years old, were such a vessel possible, a man might feel not a little surprised to learn that the names of much of the rigging and spars of the ancient craft were identical with those now in use and applied to the same objects. One never feels so much how old a calling the sailor's is, till one turns back to an age in which the mariner's vocation seems little more than an affair of "galleases" and "rowe barges." In this dim and dusty Queen Anne book on shipbuilding I find hundreds of words which form at this time the seaman's vocabulary. Whenever the spelling differs from ours the etymology is suggested; as, for instance, in the word "gyb" for "jib," which explains the derivation of the term "gybing" or "jibing," as it is sometimes spelt, though it used to be pronounced "jibbing." It would be well, perhaps, if old works of this kind were accepted as authoritative in respect of the orthography of sea words. There is no need to write "shrouds" "shrowds;" but such words as "hallyards," "lanyards," "mizin," and the like might not unreasonably have been left as they were written in days when the meaning they had, as apart from the signification they imparted, was fully understood. A full-rigged ship in the time of this author differed but little in essentials and terms from the same fabric of the day. The royal had not then come into use, but I notice the frequent employment of the term

"stump topgallant mast," which might easily be thought to imply that "long topgallant masts" were also in existence. They had a "mizen yard" as well as a "crossjack yard." This "mizen yard" is described as being as long as the foreyard. It was of a lateen nature, lying, when hoisted, at an angle upon the mizenmast, and supplying with its after end a gaff for a sail that would with us be termed the spanker. The furniture of the bowsprit was very different from what it now is. Upon this spar were set a spritsail and a spritsail topsail, and there was also a top or platform for men to stand on. The only kind of jib I find my author speak of he calls "a flying gyb, a sail of good service, to draw the ship forward, but very prejudicial to the wear of the ship forward. 'Tis used with a boom or small mast extended at the extreme of the bowsprit." It is not so very many years since that the flying jibboom of a ship was a separate spar, distinct from the jibboom, and reeving through irons on it, so here, at all events, is a Queen Anne fashion that survived certainly down to the year 1860.

Their staysails were then as now, excepting that there were no royal staysails. They had also sails called "studding sails, made use of at the extremes of the main yard and topsail yards, very beneficial when the ship goes before the wind or quartering, otherwise they are useless." We must have somewhat improved upon this, seeing that, on a bowline, a foretopmast studding sail can be set and made to do good work. Then, again, their lower yards come down on the bulwarks by means of jeers, a custom that lasted long enough to be within the experience of many living seamen. The patent truss dislodged this cumbrous arrangement, though I dare say old mariners would

often believe that the safety of their ships depended upon stripping her aloft and getting the lower yards on deck. Saving the names applied to such obsolete arrangements as spritsails, round-tops, jack crosstrees, and so forth, the present age still preserves most of the shipbuilding and nautical terms in use in the days of this old author, and one reads, not without surprise, in a book printed nearly two centuries ago, of jack-staffs, lifts and backstays, of gammoning, clew-garnets and ratlines, of caps, tops, and dead-eyes, and of guess-ropes, bowlines, and bolt-ropes. Such indeed is marine conservatism in the matter of nomenclature that I believe could any seaman who had sailed with Anson or Carteret, or even with Hawkins or Cavendish, rise from his grave and sign articles for the most eminently modern vessel that now uses the West India Docks, he could scarcely receive an order, the language of which, in so far as it referred to ropes and sails and masts, would not be perfectly intelligible to him.

Here, for instance is a sample of nautical phraseology current when Queen Anne was reigning. "Reeves," meaning reef-points, "are to take up part of the sail as the wind rises, and it becomes dangerous either for the sides of the ship or the masts to carry the topsail a-trip; and if it should be lower'd without being reef'd, it will not stand sharp to the wind, but bag and be opposed to the motion of the ship." Again: "The lower part of the topsails are spread by the main-yards, there being blocks provided for that purpose, called topsail-sheet blocks, the topsail sheets being reev'd there, and brought through another block near the slings of the yard, and so handed down to the decks, where they are reev'd through knight heads, and so hal'd home, and belay'd about the knight heads, or topsail-sheet bits." All this

is quaintly enough expressed, but who would suppose that it was two centuries old?

This ancient shipwright devotes a chapter of his work to what he calls "hydrostatic problems, or the measure of shipping consider'd." At this particular period, when senatorial fulminations against shipowners are resounding throughout the land, and when we are taught to regard overloading as peculiarly the vice of this age, one starts on coming in my dingy, queerly printed volume, on such a passage as this: "Some ships and from some places are laden a great deal deeper than they are from others; and, indeed, some are extravagantly laden, especially colliers." So then, nearly two hundred years ago there were owners, clad in full-bottomed wigs, wearing swords and rapping jewelled snuffboxes in polite coffee-houses, behaving precisely as their posterity are acting, as one should suppose. How was it that no Mr. Plimsoll arose in those days? How was it that there was no President of the Board of Trade to fire round after round at the heads of the ship-owning community? My old shipwright picturesquely explains why: "But if such persons sink their craft by so doing, I cannot perceive who they can disoblige more than themselves, provided they sink in the sea, and do not hinder or embarrass the sailing of other ships, or the uses which may be requisite to the trade of other men." That is to say, founder if you please in sixty fathoms, but don't go and sink in our fair ways, or in our harbours and rivers. These overloading people disoblige nobody more than themselves, because the destruction of the vessels was their loss, and not the underwriters'. The passage indicates a state of things which most of us are anxious to witness in the present age; yet, surely, some moral lies in the ship-

wright's statement that owners overloaded their ships, especially colliers, albeit uninsured. Suppose the loss of a ship is rendered ungainful to the owner; will that stop extravagant loading? Apparently it had no effect in the days of Queen Anne. There is yet another point that has greatly exercised the minds of this generation which my old shipwright, nearly two hundred years since disposed of in the most comfortable manner imaginable, and settled to his own entire satisfaction. I refer to that extremely nauseating subject, tonnage, on which a specially appointed Commission sat some time ago, without producing the smallest result. Says my old shipwright: "The measure of a ship may be considered three several ways. First, what the cavity will hold. Secondly, what superficial or solid inches are contained in her. Thirdly, What she will bear or carry safely from one port to another, without damnifying the goods so transported. And which of these," he continues, "may most properly be taken to adjust the tunnage of a ship, was never yet determined." He decides for the last, and his plan for getting at the "tunnage" of a ship is this:—

"I fit two parallelopipedon pieces exactly square, which, together, make up the magnitude of the ship under water, from the upper edge of the keel to the deep load-mark line. Those pieces I fit to their greatest lengths and breadth of the ship, that there may be nothing to do but to shave them to the circular figure of the body. Then I weigh them in a pair of very even scales of equal magnitude, exactly minding the quality and quantity of the poise. Then I measure the parallelopipedons, and see what they contain in foot measure, according to the scale I make use of for that purpose. After this, I shape them according to the direct fashion

and similitude of the ship under the deep load-mark line. I then weigh them again by the same weights before mentioned. But there will be no occasion to measure them again, for you may say, as the weight rough is to the measure rough, so is the weight fashion'd off to the measure fashion'd. Which product I divide by thirty-three, the quantity of feet contain'd in one tun of water, and it gives me the true and exact tunnage of the ship."

He more minutely explains himself by an example; he bids us understand that 60lb. avoirdupois, are equal to 73lb. troy, and that one foot of water is 62½lb. avoirdupois, and 33ft. make a tun.

"Then," says he, "upon weighing the parallelopipedon pieces with shillings and pence, I find the upper and lower pieces together rough weigh 54*s.* 4*d.*; the area of the length, breadth, and depth of the upper piece is 80,880ft., the area of the lower piece is 78,125ft. making a total of 159,005; upper weight trimm'd off or fashion'd weighs 24*s.* 9*d.*, lower weight 15*s.* 6*d.*, together 40*s.* 3*d.* Then, if 54*s.* 4*d.* give 159,005ft., what shall 40*s.* 3*d.* give? And it gives 117,798ft., which divided by 33 is 3,569 tuns, the weight of the ship at her deep load-mark."

He then proceeds, by means of the same arithmetic, to show the weight of the vessel at her launching. It is possible there may be shipwrights living who can see what this old Queen Anne man means. I confess I don't. But, nevertheless, the chat of this ancient artisan, even when I don't quite follow him—the talk of this quaint old chap, who gets at a ship's tonnage by weighing strangely named things with shillings and pence—is extremely amusing and interesting to me, and I never quit his page without the sort of feeling a diver

of sensibility might have, who emerges into the sunlight out of the cabin of a craft that went to the bottom when Milton was bewailing Lycidas. To hear what this shipwright has to tell about shipbuilding, rigging, tonnage, and such things, makes one think of him as a marine Rip Van Winkle, who fell asleep when Queen Anne died, and now wakes up gravely to talk about the art of shipbuilding, as though steam were yet two hundred years distant, and the *Agincourts* and *Temeraires* were little more than snows and pinks. There is a magic in such a dusty old tome as this, with its wild cuts, uncouth type, and queerly spelt words, which it is quite possible to seek in vain in much of the poetry and the philosophical essays, the sermons and dramas of my old friend's day. For he opens wide a great scene, draws apart the curtains of the past, and forces you to look back and behold with your own eyes the causes of this country's greatness. His drawings are rude; the ships they represent of a bewildering pattern; but the messages they delivered from their coarse and powerful oaken sides ring down in thunder along the centuries to us yet, and we know that the men who manned them did giant's work in making our national flag what it is.

CAN THESE DRY BONES LIVE?

"Well, sir," said the old captain to me—a retired ship-master, with the gaze of a vulture under the apparently sleepy lid, and a face full of lines and discoloration like the wrinkling of currents in the glassy swathes of a dead calm on some dingy spread of water off the West African coast—"I had been always a bit superstitious up to then, but I own that that job cured me. But it made me see also that it isn't reasonable to be too contemptuous of one's fellow-creatures who believe in spirits and manifestations, of which there is no organ, sense, or quality in the human body to take notice of, saving credulity. It comes to this, sir: human nature never gets beyond a certain pass. We sail to that point, and then the wind shifts, and we drop astern. From time to time it is put into us to think foolishly, that the thoughtful amongst us may understand how little ahead of the old folks we are, spite of all our discoveries. I've watched this fad of ghosts amongst us of late; the growth of societies which aim to enlarge men's knowledge of what doesn't exist; and it takes me back to the days when I was a young 'un, when there were still witches in the country, and old women were ducked and drowned for sailing athwart the moonlight on broomsticks. We were a bit coarser then in our

superstitions than now, made our ghosts hags instead of spirits of beauty, fled from candles in turnips, and reckoned that when old Bogey wanted us he arrived down the chimney. But the quality remains the same. It is only brightened in these times, polished up, and made to look in other ways finer. Now, however, to give you my yarn.

"I was master of a ship of eight hundred tons. We were loaded with a general cargo, bound to the East Indies. It is many years ago, when ship's companies were numerous, partly through the compulsion of the navigation laws, partly because owners wanted their ships to keep afloat, partly because you wouldn't have got sailors to ship if there had not been hands to do the work; and my complement numbered between forty and forty-five men. In a crowd of this kind one doesn't take particular notice. When the crew are few, you come to know your Jims, and Joes, and Toms, as you come to know your dogs at home, or as a man who is worth only a few shillings is not only conscious of what he has in his pocket, but can tell you the character of the coins also. We were without passengers, simply a well-manned cargo vessel, all of the olden time, though a handsome boat in our way, frigate-built, painted ports, wide channels, great black tops, the yards square enough to serve a line of battle-ship, and the royals, when mast-headed, sitting close against the trucks—the properest topping off, to my taste, to the fabric of a full-rigged ship.

"We had been out a fortnight, when in the afternoon there came on a sudden squall. The fore and mizen topgallant sails were clewed up, with a hand standing by at the main topgallant halliards. I noticed some figures in the forerigging going aloft to roll up the sail

there, and then on a sudden there was a commotion, a running of men forward, and a gathering of them into a heap around something. I told the mate to go and see what was the matter. He returned with the news that a man in the act of going aloft had fallen dead on deck off the rail. We were without a doctor, and all hands looked to me in a case of this kind. I walked to where the man lay, and found him to be an able seaman; an old yellow-haired man, whose face I had before taken notice of for the ghastly complexion of it; a sort of dusky, parchment-like hue, the colour of sailor's duff that's been too long in the coppers. The lids were half closed, nothing but the whites showing; the lips set hard in a sort of half grin, without froth, and the arms outstretched in the posture of a crucified person. Short of a skeleton, to my notion, one ought never to be able to say cocksurely, pointing to a body, '*this* is Death.' The fellow might be in a faint, or in a fit, or a cataleptic; his body in death's strait jacket, and the mind within all alive and wondering what the deuce has gone wrong outside. I ordered him to be carried to his bunk and rubbed, and to be treated as if he was to be brought to, and if that failed, then to be stowed away out of the sight of the men; but not to be stitched up for a bit, so that if there was any spark of life in him it might have a chance. The fact is, I wanted to make sure that he was a dead man before he was tossed overboard, a very proper feeling in me, no doubt, though there was a touch of morbidity in it, too; for, to tell the truth, the one quiet horror of my life in those days was the thought of being buried alive, and what I feared for myself I was not the sort of man to put upon another.

"Well, after two days we were all agreed that he was dead, so I gave orders for him to be stitched up and

brought to the gangway, and next morning after breakfast we held the service. It was always my desire that matters of this kind should be carried out with proper solemnity. I considered it worked as a wholesome influence amongst the sailors, who were made to understand that a dead seaman on the ocean was not to be treated as if he were a dead pauper out of a workhouse; that a show of respect and regret, at all events, should go to his funeral, since a shipmate is a shipmate the wide world over. The body, stitched in its hammock, with a sinker stowed away in the clews, was placed upon a grating and covered with the ensign. Then the grating was lifted by four men and brought to the rail, one end of it resting there, the other end supported by two men, who stood ready to whip off the ensign and let the body slide when the time should come for so doing.

"All hands gathered around, washed and clean. It was a quiet morning, a light breeze of wind blowing, the ship under all plain sail, everything silent aloft, the deck heaving slightly to the small beam sea. I came out of the cabin with my prayer-book in my hand and started to read, the men baring their heads, with the grinding here and there of a jaw upon a hunk of tobacco standing high in the cheek-bone, and much wistful and inquisitive peering at poor Jack's outline by eyes bleared by the gales of wind into which they had stared.

"I was proceeding, reading with great emphasis and solemnity, when there rose from under the ensign a short muffled, groaning sort of cry of '*For God's sake cut me adrift, mates! I'm suffocating!*'

"The prayer-book fell from my hand; the two fellows who were holding the grating let go of it and shot

forward, whereupon off rolled the body on to the deck amongst the feet of the sailors, who, letting fly a volley of curses in their alarm, bolted in all directions, some of them even jumping into the rigging. Had a bomb-shell exploded amongst us the clearance effected could not have been more complete.

"The mates had run away as well as the seamen, and the cowardice of all hands put temper enough into me to rally my nerves.

"'Quick,' I bawled; 'cut the poor wretch adrift, or he'll be suffocated in good earnest, and it will be a worse murder done than had we buried him.'

"On this the chief mate and some others came to the body, shouldering one another, and ripped open the hammock. Well, dead or alive, 'twould have been better to have given the thing its last toss than have witnessed such a sight. You see it was warmish weather, and the body besides had been—but I'll say no more on *that;* only that such an apparition rising before the stoutest army that ever took the field would have sent it flying without waiting for the buglers to sound. But he'd called out that he was suffocating, and we looked to see him move, all hands coming up in bunches at a time, till there we were all of a heaving and squirming muddle, with this horror in the midst of us, and the men squirting juice in all directions through sheer loathing.

"'If that man ben't dead,' said the bo'sun, 'my eyes ain't mates.'

"'Did he wriggle at all?' said I, addressing one of the fellows who held the grating, 'before you let go and run away?'

"The man answered he hadn't noticed any movement.

"'He spoke, anyway,' said the mate.

"'Well, pickle my eyes for onions if there was ever a rummier start than this,' cried the carpenter, stooping to look close at the man, and then recoiling with a heave of the breast and a long wipe of his mouth down the length of his hairy arm.

"I ordered the body to be carried to a cabin, and put the second mate along with a seaman to watch it; but their report to me was that if the fellow was alive he gave no signs of it, but that, on the contrary, he was imitating death so incomparably as to oblige them to beg me to allow some others to relieve them, as they did not feel strong enough to go on. I then viewed the body myself, and no longer having a doubt gave orders that it should be stitched up afresh and once again brought to the gangway.

"It was now eight bells in the afternoon. Of course it was right that this old Jack should be buried decently, and I resolved to go through with the funeral service, but I let it be known that there was no obligation upon the men to attend outside the few who were needed to do the work. Nevertheless all hands turned up as before. Well, I started to read as I had in the morning, but at the very moment, of my pronouncing the same words I was delivering when the interruption happened, there came a most audible but half-choking and half-smothered groan or grunt of '*Oh, Lord, they mean to drown me after all!*' from under the ensign.

"The fellow that held the right corner of the grating let go, and went backing amongst his mates with a cry of dismay; but the other man, bawling out with a face darkened by passion, 'You old villain! how many burials d'ye expect, and be d——d to you!' tilted the grating and away flashed the hammock overboard.

"We all stood looking on like idiots. For my part,

captain as I was, I hadn't a word to say for the moment. In fact, I was thunderstruck. The groan of the corpse was scarce off the ear before the body was gone, and yet you couldn't think of us as having drowned him either, for nothing could have seemed deader than did this old Jack when I took my last view of him. However, no purpose could be served by making a fuss; it was one of those breaches of discipline that defy your cool reason though you may handle them as you will in a passion. Besides, a moment or two's reflection, coupled with a look round, satisfied me that the men would be easier in their minds for being quit of the body, and so, telling the mate to send the hands forward, I went to my cabin; but more mystified, under a livelier consternation of mind, in short, than it would suit me to admit to everybody. It was idle to talk of tricks. I might have reconciled myself to some notion of that kind had I made one of two or three spectators; but here had been forty or fifty of us all lumped together, and the reality of the thing came out in the sincerity of the fright, for the morning panic was much greater than I have put it, whilst the terror in the afternoon might have shown as wild, had the fellows at the grating let fall the body again amongst the men.

"Well, at ten o'clock that night I left the deck to lie down. All was quiet. The influence of that day's work was expressed in the manner of the men, who had moved and talked very soberly, with subdued gestures and tones, and in the dog-watches I had noticed them hanging together in knots, conversing like people fresh from an execution. I was aroused from my sleep by the second mate, who had charge of the deck.

"'There's the whole watch below, sir, come aft to complain that they can't get any rest.'

"'What's the matter?' said I, starting up.

"'Why, they say they can hear old Jack's voice calling to them down in the forepeak.'

"'Old Jack's voice?' I cried, and with that I followed him on deck, where, sure enough, I found all hands massed together on the quarter-deck.

"'What's the matter, men?' I called out, leaning over the rail at the break of the poop to speak to them.

"The carpenter spoke up, 'There's old Jack hailing us in the forepeak, sir.'

"'Nonsense, man.'

"'Smite me, sir, if it ain't the blooming truth; not only hailing but a-cussing us for having drowned him.'

"'But you must know that that can't be,' said I, 'he's leagues astern and fathoms deep.'

"A voice answered, 'He's cussing us all the same. He swears he'll haunt us all overboard.'

"I told the second mate to go forward and report if he could hear anything of this strange voice. A shadowy group of men went with him; indeed, I doubt if he would have had heart to drop into the forecastle alone. Presently he returned, coming aft with a run and speaking with a broken breath.

"'It's true, sir,' he gasped, 'if it isn't old Jack, it's the devil. I heard him say, "*I'll punish all of ye for drowning of me. Head as you will, 'tis old Jack as is at the hellum now, and so stand by!*"'

"'But, good thunder!' cried I, 'how is a man's voice going to sound in the forecastle out of the forepeak? Answer me that, you fool.'

"'Well, come forrards and hear it yourself, sir,' he exclaimed sullenly.

"I instantly assented, and walked forward, followed by all hands; and not without a beating heart, I admit,

but with a good air of carelessness upon me, I stepped into the forecastle. It was a topgallant forecastle, entered by doors abreast of the windlass ends; a slush lamp swung under the beam, and the light was very weak. I entered with the second mate, and stood listening. For some minutes nothing sounded but the hard breathing of the seamen, who filled the doorways, squeezing the foremost in, though these pressed back like a wall, making such a jam as might account for louder snorings. Queer creakings and groanings arose out of the slightly swaying hull into the silence, with the faint sound of the bow wave softly washing from the cutwater. Then, on a sudden, I heard a dim hoarse voice—weakened as it were by the thickness of the deck between, with a note of rage in it as though the fellow could barely articulate for his teeth being fixed—exclaim, '*Curse the ship, I says! curse all hands in her, says I. I'm a murdered man, and I'll haunt ye all.*'

"'There, sir,' cried the second mate, backing to the men, whose breathing was now stormy with emotion.

"Scarce was this said, when one of the seamen, who had apparently been forced forwards by the pressure of the others, was run almost up to me by the long arm of the chief mate, who, unperceived by me, had worked his way into the crowd to learn what was going on. This mate stood over six feet high, and was a giant in strength, and the head of the fellow whom his shoulder-of-mutton fist grasped by the scruff of the neck was on a level with his chin.

"'Here's the ghost, sir,' said he.

"The sailors now came bundling in in a swarm.

"'This is the ghost,' repeated the mate, giving the fellow a shake which threatened to throw his head off his neck. 'Tis deuced clever, my lad, but it's a joke

that wants sea room,' another shake. 'Own to it, own to it!' he cried, 'before I screw your neck off.'

"'I own to it,' said the man.

"'Own to what?' I asked.

"'Why, sir,' answered the mate, 'he has the trick of throwing his voice, and wonderfully well he does it too. I had my eye on him this afternoon and suspected him. I'm sure of it now, for he didn't know I stood close behind him.'

"Some of the men muttered. I perceived that they looked upon this as a conspiracy between me and the mate to allay their fears, and clearly seeing that it must be as the mate said, and heartily despising myself for the alarm I had felt throughout the day, I immediately formed a resolution.

"'Your name's Andover?' said I to the man.

"'Yes, sir,' he answered.

"'You confess that it was you who made old Jack talk on the grating and down here?'

"'I do, sir,' he answered, with a writhe, for the shoulder of mutton clung to him as a vice.

"'Prove it to the men,' said I, 'and I'll forgive you. You can let go of him, Mr. Moore.'

"The man coughed; a moment after we heard old Jack cursing us all in the forepeak. The deception was exquisite; in sober truth, my admiration of the skill of the fellow would have been altogether too great to suffer me to punish him, even had I not promised him forgiveness. A few further examples of his genius sufficed to reassure the sailors, and I went aft, leaving them to deal with him as they chose. However, he managed to make his peace by entertaining them with his art as a ventriloquist. Indeed, after the first spasm of temper, they were too well pleased to believe that old Jack was

really dead and gone, and too much astonished by Andover's cleverness to feel much resentment.

"I often had this man in the cabin afterwards to amuse me. He had the face of a born comedian, and I strongly advised him to start as a ventriloquist ashore, where, I don't doubt, under proper training, he might have proved a fortune for himself or for an employer. But, unhappily, he got into some scrape at our first port of call, and I had to leave him behind me; and when, long afterwards, I inquired after him, I gathered that he had taken to drink and died in a hospital. Yet I recall him with gratitude, for he quite cured me of my superstitions."

"THAT THERE LITTLE TOMMY."

"WELL, all that I can say is, 'Here's luck, I'm sure!'" exclaimed my nautical friend, directing his little eyes into an eager squint at the froth that crowned the pot he held in his hand. He then drank, and proceeded as follows: "As I was saying, there was a gent of the name of Parkinson, a regular sea-side wisitor, a rich man, as I allow, for he always brought two servants with him from London, and his wife and darters went dressed up to the knocker, whilst their lodgings was a matter of some ten guineas a week—tidy bit o' money, eh, sir? Only think! all that gold for the use of a roof and a bed, and what they calls a wiew!—though I'd be glad to look out of my back winders with nothing better in sight than an old clothes-line and three or four hens for a quarter that sum, paid regular every week. Well, as I was a-saying, Mr. Parkinson he comes one day down to the beach, and calling me up to him he says, after a sort of look around,

"'Jimmy,' he says, 'I've got a scheme in my head which I want you to carry out for me. You was a blue salt-water sailor,' he says, 'for years, which is more'n most of your mates has got to boast of, and I reckon that you're the right man to execute the job I wants to see put into haction. You know my boy Tommy?' he says.

"'I ought to,' I answers. 'He's asted me questions enough consarning the sea life to make me know him if he talked inside a sack o' taters.'

"'Ay,' says Mr. Parkinson, 'that's just it, Jimmy,' he says; 'here's this boy Tommy crazy to be off to sea. Of course, he don't know why he wants to go. He ain't got no true notions of the life whatever. He's been a laying out of his pocket money in tales about pirates, and treasures in islands, and the likes of such 'longshore swash, and what with them romantic notions and the craving after the gilt buttons with which they coaxes poor little chaps into persuading their fathers to put down good money for the privilege of their sons doing all the dirty work that is to be done at sea, there's nothen that'll appease him but going, and 'tween you and me and the bedpost, Jimmy, I don't mean that he *should* go. But how to stop him? He's not wanting in sperrit, and's just the sort of lad for to run away and make his mother look twice as old as she is with worrit. Now,' he says, 'there's no doubt,' he says, says he, 'that if I was to send him for a woyage in a collier, or some wessel making a short coasting trip, I might manage to sicken him out of the life. But then he's but a little chap, Jimmy, and not fit for such sufferings as he'd have to endure if I was to start him on an experimental cruise. If it was the Royal Navy,' he says, says he, 'I dunno that I should so much object to his being a sailor, but this 'ere little Tommy,' he says, 'won't listen to the Royal Navy. He's got it into his head that there's no seamanship to be larnt aboard them ironclads, and he says nothen 'll satisfy him but a sailing ship, where there's plenty of climbing to be done and where the boys are allowed to steer; wessels which go round the world and wisits all sorts

of countries, for d'ye see, Jimmy,' he says, 'it is all romance on the part of this here little Tommy, and arter his uniform and the chance of coming home with a shipload of treasure, not to say of his taking command of a pirate when he's sarved his owners twelve months say, arter these here things,' he says, says he, 'in that there little Tommy's mind come cocoanuts with a monkey behind, and perhaps a paroqueet to follow. He is but eleven years old, Jimmy,' he says, 'and what should such a little chap as that know about the ocean life?'

"'Ay,' says I, 'what indeed?'

"'Well,' he says, 'tell 'ee now what my scheme is. 'Stead of sending little Tommy to sea to find out for himself, suppose we keep him ashore and give him all the hardships of the calling we can manage to heap upon him without doing him any hurt?'

"I felt my eyes brighten, for I saw the gent's notion right away and reckoned it an A1 copper-bottomed fancy.

"'You've got a house of your own, Jim,' he says.

"'I have, sir,' says I.

"'Well now,' says he, 'suppose you take charge of this 'ere little Tommy and put him through his training, ondertaking not to hurt him. Introduce all the shipboard discipline that's manageable in a house.'

"'Ay, ay, sir,' says I, grinning, 'I see.'

"'Don't give him nothen but shipboard wittles to eat; and perhaps you'll contrive that they ain't of the best at *that*. See that the pea-soup is like what sailors get in the forecastle. Better look out for some mouldy biscuit, too, and if there ain't no worms in it make pretend that there is. Likewise purwide that the water ain't over sweet; contrive, if you can, to give it a sort

of bunghole flavey. Ye know what I mean. And now,' says he, 'have I said enough?'

"'Ay, sir,' says I, on the broad grin, 'if he ain't cured it won't be because the physic 'll be stinted.'

"'Right,' says he, 'his mother's willing. Go to work. I know ye of old, Jimmy; it's not everybody as I'd trust my boy to,' and so saying he slips ten pound into my hand, whilst he gives me certain instructions when to call for the boy and the like.

"Well, 'twas a first-class job for me, more'n my line than boating, with a laugh to be got out of it tew, so I just tells my wife what to expect, her and me living alone; and then, arter laying out a pound or tew in certain articles proper for this here doctoring business, I tips one of our chaps down on the beach to get me certain prowisions from the wessels which were lying off. 'Twas to be done by bribery and other corruptions, and afore noon next day I'd enough ship's grub in my house to last four such little 'uns as this here Tommy a fortnight, and perhaps three weeks, which was much longer than I reckoned the operation 'ud take. I took care that the fodder should be got out of the homeward bounders. There was no chance of getting such prowisions ashore. The biscuits 'ud come in new and very good eatin', and the joke 'ud have been a bit too expensive had I laid in the pork and beef that I required in the quantity it's sold at—I mean in casks and tierces. No, I got all that I wanted through my mates, and at a trifling cost tew, out of wessels brought up after middling long passages; and a pretty collection it was, enough to make me thank the Lard *I'd* knocked off the calling.

"Well, all being ready, including of a little hammock and a suit of oilskins, the smallest that was to be got,

and the legs cut down at that, along with a boy's sou'-wester, I went up to the gentleman's house and asted for little Master Tommy. I was showed in. Mr. and Mrs. Parkinson come to me first, and the Missis looked like crying, and was constantly interrupting her husband to beg me to be kind to her boy, to take care that he didn't catch cold under my treatment, and to give him plenty to eat, though she wasn't going to say nothen' against the coarseness of the wittles I might prowide. I wouldn't argue, for I'd catch Mr. Parkinson a vinking at me, which was the same as saying, 'Tis a mother that's speaking to ye, Jimmy; stow your objections, my lad; it's all right.' Then little Tommy was sent for, and in he comes, full of excitement. He had fair hair, and was a pretty little lad—a bit thin perhaps, dressed out in knickerbockers, with a sort o' sauciness about him, such as comes to boys who want to make their-selves believe they're older than they are, and who think cockiness another name for manliness. Only t'other day I see a bit of a chap of this kind smoking a cegarette, and, Lard! didn't these here fingers tingle with the want to spank him!

"'Well, sir,' says I to this here young Tommy, 'so you're the gent, sir,' says I, 'as is going to be a sailor?'

"'Ay,' says he, 'Jim'—for his father called me Jim and so did he—'yes; there's nothen else fit for a man but the sea.'

"'All right, master Tommy,' I says, says I, 'we'll now tarn to and take a spell of sailorizing—play at sailor, d'ye see, without having to run any risks of going ashore, or keeping the pumps at it day an' night, or getting stranded, and lashing ourselves high aloft in the freezing wet;' and here I glances at his ma, who

tossed her hands and rolled her eyes up to the ceiling. 'Got your bundle ready, Tommy?' says I.

"'It'll be sent,' says the father.

"'No, sir,' I says, says I; 'excuse me,' I says, 'a true sailor always carries his own kit along with him;' so with that a bag, containing Master Tommy's night-shirt and a hairbrush and the like, was brought, it being arranged that what he wanted in other ways was to be called for.

"Tommy had never been to my house afore, and though he had talked pretty cockily all the way to it, yet when we arrived he fell silent, and looked oncomfortable. He'd been used to tall rooms and good furniture, d'ye see, and couldn't make nothen of a parlour that opened right on into a street, with a ceiling which a cheer would almost bring his head agin. That there cottage of mine was a hundred and fifty year old, and what with the sinking of the floors, like the slope of a ship's deck in a breeze of wind, and the smell of the old timber, and the wooden partitions like cabin bulkheads, with beams across the ceiling, and a dark up and down staircase, 'tis as good an imitation of a ship's forecastle to fit to the fancy of such a boy as that there little Tommy, as his dad could ha' struck upon. However, he growed more manly presently, and asted to see his bedroom.

"'No bedrooms aboard ship, young 'un,' says I, roughly, 'we don't go to bed at sea, we tarns in. Come you along with me,' I says, says I, talking hoarsely and putting on the airs of a severe bo'sun; and with that I led him upstairs into a room where there was no carpet, nothen but a sea chest which I'd borrowed, and a hammock swinging from the ceiling.

"'There,' says I, 'here's where ye spend your watch

below. That's your bed, d'ye see,' says I, 'and that'll be your cheer and your table,' I says, pointing to the chest, 'for that's how sailors eat and sleep at sea,' I says, 'and there ain't no manliness to equal the calling.'

"I thought he'd pipe his eye as he looked round; but he bit his little lip, arter a stare at the hammock, and said nothen.

"'Now, then,' says I wiolently, 'off with your coat and boots, my lad; whip off them stockings. We've got a wash-down job afore us.'

"He did as he was told, but was a bit long in doing of it, on which I thundered at him, telling him that if he was at sea he'd be rope's ended for not bearing a hand.

"'Do it hurt?' he says.

"'Ay, more'n hurt,' says I, 'it stings. Quick now, or I shall have to let ye know what it's like.'

"Well, I took him downstairs into the kitchen, and arter telling my missis to clear out I put a scrubbing brush into his hands and took a bucket o' water and set him a-scrubbing. It went agin the grain, sir, to see the little blue-eyed, thin-legged chap heaving away with a brush that was nigh twice as tall as he, but I says to myself, 'He's ashore anyhow. 'Tis but a play lesson. His mother's within hail of him, and since I'm to be his schoolmaster I must do my duty.' Well, I splashed the water about, calling out to him to scrub smartly all in proper sea fashion, and when the job was over we made it eight bells and went to dinner. My old woman had cooked him some ship's peasoup an' pork, a-making the soup under my directions as they make it at sea. Our own dinner was a piece o' roast mutton, with greens and 'taters, 'spressly prowided for the tantalization of

the smell. I was fur roast pork, but my missis says that roast mutton 'ud show better and smell more savoury agin the wittles the boy was to have, and so I consented. He wouldn't eat.

"'Not seasick, are ye?' says I.

"'I don't like it,' he says; 'can't I go home and get my dinner?' he says.

"'Go *home?*' I says, 'why,' says I, 'don't ye know that you're in the middle of the ocean? A sailor's home's his fork'sle. When ye get's ashore, my lad, ye shall have roast mutton and wegetables,' says I, smacking my lips with a sort of look of 'ain't it good?' in my eyes as I stared at the mutton; 'but whilst you're at sea you must eat the ship's allowance; so fall tew, d'ye hear?'

"But I couldn't wonder at his not eating. We'd put some wood to soak in the fresh water we gave him to drink, and the flavey lay strong in his pannikin. The pork was mainly brine, and what was over ye might fairly call smell. The biscuit was broken, soft, and honeycombed, and I told him to beat it on the table afore putting it into his mouth, that if there was worms in it they might drop out. The soup was a thin yaller, greasy liquor. The peas in it was like the shingle off the beach.

"'Is this the sort of food they gives to sailors?' says he.

"'Yes,' says I. 'And what choicer eating could a feller with the feelings of a man ask for? 'Taint all soup and pork; there's a beautiful wariety a-going at sea. To-morrow'll be salt beef and duff, and the day arter a lovely mess, what's known amongst seafaring men as soap and bullion. Why, ye ain't made no dinner at all, Master Tommy.'

"'No, and I don't want none,' says he, recoiling-like from the steam of the pork—small blame to him! The missis and I had currant dumplings for pudden, and the poor little chap eyed 'em with a starving gaze. The missis looked at me, but I steeled my 'art.

"'No,' I says to myself, 'If this ere physic's to do the little 'un good it mustn't be sweetened.'

"Well, that arternoon I put him to a number of small jobs. There was a yard at the back of our cottage, and I stretched a rope along it and made him tar it, rig'larly obliged him to shove his little white hand into a tar bucket.

"'It's all hands on deck, ye know,' says I, 'aboard this wessel from eight bells in the morning down to eight bells in the arternoon watch; so ye must keep all on at it.'

"And when his tarring was done I made him clean a brass binnacle-hood that I'd borrowed, and then I put him to sandpapering an oar, and so on till it come time for tea or 'supper,' as I called it, to this here Tommy. Well, his supper, which I told him to eat hearty of, as there would be nothen' more to follow, consisted of ship's tea, that made a black liquor in which the missis left all the stalks and roots, sweetened with a dose of foot sugar, along with the biscuit that had been sarved to him at dinner. I told him, as he'd not eaten his allowance of pork, he might have it for his supper; but he answered that the smell of it made him feel ill. He drank a little of the tea, making ugly faces, and now, being sharp-set, contrived to swaller a few bits of ship's bread, but the way in which he watched the brown bread and butter and the cups of corfee which me and the missis was making our tea off was downright affecting.

"'Now, ye see,' says I, 'how well looked arter sailors are when they goes to sea in the matter of prowisions. Ain't it a manly calling, just! My eye! It's growed almost too manly for Englishmen, and the foreigner's fast squeezing of us all out. So, Master Tommy, arter your father's paid for the priwelege of your eating such lovely food as I've put afore 'ee to-day, and arter you're gone near to break your heart with the work they'll put upon ye without paying you the worth of a farden's worth of silver spoons for it, then, when your time's out, they'll kick ye ashore that you may make way for the blooming foreigner as'll be glad to take your place for half the money ye ask. Oh, but ain't it a manly life, though! My eye!'

"Well, I told him he might turn in when it came eight o'clock. I showed him how to get into his hammock, but made him keep on his knickerbockers, 'For,' says I, 'it looks dirty weather, and it may be "all hands" presently.'

"He asked for sheets.

"'Pooh!' I says, says I, 'there ain't no sheets at sea. Hain't ye got a good blanket up there? That's all the sheets a sailor wants.'

"Well, I left him, and waited till I thought he was fast asleep, and then, running into his room, it being about half-past ten o'clock at night, I blew an old whistle that was mine when I was bo'sun's mate, stamping heavily with both feet whilst I piped, and then roared out at the top of my woice, 'All hands reef topsails! bear a hand, my livelies, afore she turns turtle!' and with that I thumped at the hammock.

"'What am I to do?' sings out the poor little chap.

"'Tumble up, tumble up!' I yells out. 'There's a whole gale o' wind busted upon us.'

"Well, he gets up, and I shan't forget the sight of his little legs over the edge of the hammock, I bawling to him to bear a hand all the time, helping him without appearing to do so by bringing his shoes to him, and then making him wrop hisself up in his oilskins; and then, pretending to be in a fearful hurry as though we was in a sittivation of awful danger, I rushes him out into the back yard. As luck would have it, it was really blowing fresh, but not cold, with a teasing drizzle of rain in squalls.

"'There,' says I, 'we'll imagine ye've been aloft, and now your watch on deck's come round, and ye ain't to go to bed again for four hours. So tarn too, my lively, and pace this 'ere deck to keep yourself warm, and when my watch comes round I'll relieve ye.' And with that I left him.

"Well, sir," said my nautical friend, as he finished his beer, "it 'ud take me all day long to tell you how I handled that there little Tommy. 'Twas on a Toosday that I fetched him, and he hung out till Friday, and then coming home from a herrand I asted my missis where the boy was, and she said he was a-missing. I sot down and laughed, knowing how it was, for I'd seen it in his face ever since Wednesday, when the duff came up for his dinner, along with a bit of salt horse the old woman had biled for him; and, sure enough, two hours arterwards comes Mr. Parkinson, a-smiling all down his back.

"'Jimmy,' says he, 'I allow ye've done it this time, my boy. Little Tommy's come home and's been a-crying like a babby to his mother, and says that he don't see no more manliness left in the sea, and would rather be a clown or an engine-driver than a hadmiral.'"

"And so," said I to my nautical friend, "the lad

was really cured, effectually cured, of his desire to be a sailor?"

He looked at me with a grin.

"So much cured, sir," he answered, "that it was only the day before yesterday that he came up to me as I was standing on the beach, and arter making himself beknown—for he was growed so, and so coloured with the sun that I should never have recognized him—he says to me, 'Let me see, Jimmy; it's four year ago now, I think, since I was aboard your cottage. It wasn't fair, Jim. The life's better nor your dam messes and backyard. I'm just home from 'Frisco, and tell 'ee what, Jim, the life may be as hard as you told me it was, and p'r'aps harder; but I ain't disappointed in the manliness of it, and, spite of its puddens, and its soap and bullion, I'd rather be a sailor than a boatman. Here, you old villain,' he says, giving me five shillings, 'go and drink my health,' he says, says he, 'and wish my ship a speedy woyage, for I'm bound away to New Zealand in three weeks, and I'll tell ye more about it when I comes home next time. Cure him!" continued my nautical friend, with a face of disgust. "No, by the piper! and who wanted to? Cure an English lad of his taste for the sea! It'll be good night to Britannia as is the pride of the hocean when *that's* to be done, sir."

A LUMINOUS SAILOR.

A WILD old crimp story still lingers in the memory of nautical men; but there is an odd sequel to it known to a few only. Elderly seamen would date the occurrence 1853, one year before the introduction of the Merchant Shipping Act; but there is little doubt that it belongs to an earlier time than that. The Yankees fasten the tale upon the English; the English, it is needless to say, strenuously decline the compliment. For my part, having regard to the character of the American crimp, I have not the least imaginable doubt that the rightful birthplace of the story is New York.

An old-fashioned wooden ship, with a big, gloomy, topgallant forecastle, as that sort of structure is called, corresponding with an elevation aft named the poop, was lying alongside a New York wharf, the people aboard in the act of casting the fasts adrift, that she might start on a voyage to Liverpool. The scene was a lively one; drunken sailors bawling, the mate shouting, loafers on the wharf calling to the crew as they lurched drunkenly into the ship. A little procession was noticed coming along. It consisted of a number of men bearing three sailors who were hopelessly and entirely dead drunk. The spectacle was a disgusting one, but it was something manifestly familiar to the onlookers, whose careless glances and half grins illustrated the indifference

that is bred of custom. One of these drunken men's faces the crimps had been considerate enough to conceal with a shawl or handkerchief; the other two were exposed, and one might have imagined from their aspect that they had died of some pestilence that permitted no time for the construction of a coffin, and that they were about to be plunged, habited as they were, into a pit on top of others who had similarly perished. These three men, however, were a portion of the crew of the ship. They were only a little more drunk than the rest who had reeled on board, and certainly not more useless.

The captain on the quarter-deck eyed the procession grimly and askant, as it wended its way from the gangway to the forecastle and disappeared past the shadow of the windlass. Possibly he was too accustomed to such sights as this to trouble himself with any sort of moralizing on Jack and his habits. His ship wanted men; and so long as his forecastle was duly filled he had no need to concern himself on the method adopted for furnishing it. In the old days of the press-gang it was all the same to the captain of a man-of-war whether the fellows who were brought aboard arrived drunk or sober. A few hours would clear the atmosphere of the 'tweendecks, and there was the discipline of the rattan and the cat and the grating to round off all that needed doing. So the eye of our Yankee skipper would instinctively glance from his forecastle into which his crew were drunkenly rolling or being carried, to the nearest iron belaying-pin or to the figure of the giant chief mate roaring to a lumper below with the notes of a gale of wind. Some of the fellows whom the crimp had brought along with him might not have shaken all the hayseed out of their hair yet, but there were combs enough abroad for the clearance and smoothing of even

rougher tresses than theirs in the shape of revolvers, crows, handspikes, and the like, and our Yankee master mariner therefore could find much even in a few moments of reflection to console him for the sight of his drugged and drunken ship's company hiccoughing and blaspheming and disappearing in the gloom forward under the overhanging break of the dark, cavernous sea-parlour in the bows.

Some of these noble and lively hearties fell down on entering the forecastle, and snored away their distemper of boarding-house whiskey on their backs upon the planks; others rolled into their bunks, where they instantly fell asleep. The dismal procession deposited its hideous, pitiful burden—a touching illustration of Jack's notions of enjoying himself ashore. Two of the insensible men were flung into bunks and left to lie in the first posture their drug-paralyzed limbs took up. In the bestowal of the third some little care was taken. A bunk was found for him right in the eyes of the vessel, that is to say in the foremost bedplace in the forecastle, where the gloom was scarcely touched by the light falling through the scuttle and fathoms out of the reach of the penetrating powers of the smoky flame of the melancholy little slush lamp. With undertaker-like caution the crimp and his assistants laid this drunken seaman down, smoothing his legs along, adjusting his arms to an easy attitude of slumber, turning his face to the ship's side, and snugging him with a blanket, till nothing was to be seen of him but his yellow hair. They then quietly withdrew, and shortly afterwards the ship, worked by such few hands as were equal to laying aloft and pulling and hauling, got under weigh and proceeded on her voyage.

The drunken men were left undisturbed during the

afternoon. As one by one they recovered from their stupor, they mounted on deck, trembling, sodden, horribly miserable, their heads racked with the anguish of the poison of that last bottle they had been tempted to drain. But Yankee skippers and giant mates are people of sensibilities not to be very readily moved by the trembling legs and aching brows of seamen newly recovered from a debauch. As the men appeared they were promptly "turned to" to the tune of many choice sea blessings showered upon their eyes and other parts.

The three sailors, however, who had formed a detail of the procession remained insensible in their bunks. The drug they were under the spell of rendered them insensible to the thunder of the giant mate's summons to come forth and steer and climb the masts, and fulfil the many various duties of the mariner. There was nothing for it but to let them lie. But at midnight one of them awoke, and turned out in a dazed sleep-walking way, and went on deck, where he was shortly afterwards knocked down by the second mate for failing to catch some order that had been hastily given to him. Then a little later on there followed a tragedy. The watch below were startled by a piercing scream, a wild and terrible cry that the Day of Judgment had arrived, that the forecastle was full of rats who would eat them all up, so that, when the trumpet sounded, no man would be able to appear save in the form of a rat, which would result in his utter perdition!—shrieking which the second of the three insensible men shot from his bunk, fled on deck, and jumped overboard. It was not known that he had done this until search had been made for him, and the captain, fearing the loss of another man from a similiar cause, gave orders that the third fellow, lying still motionless in his bunk

right forward, should be left undisturbed, that nature might bring him to in her own way.

It was at eight bells in the first watch the next night that the men going below to turn in smelt an evil smell. A grim old salt sniffing around exclaimed that some of the rats, which the fellow had yelled out about on the previous night, must have died of fright at his cry and gone bad. Pugh! what was it? All hands fell to sniff-snuffling. Was there anything wrong with the cargo in the forehold?

"Here's the cause of it, mates!" suddenly exclaimed one of the sailors, going to the bunk in which the third man lay insensible; and, plucking the fellow's arm from under the blanket, he lifted and let it fall, when it swung up and down like a pump handle. "Dead," he cried, "or my eyes ain't mates."

The rest of them come pushing together to look. To enable them to see, one of them struck a lucifer match, and held the flame close to the dead man's face, whereupon a thin vein of greenish fire spouted out of the lips of the corpse, and in a breath the whole of his face was acrawl with lambent spirituous flames. Instantly the fellow who held the match let it fall with a cry. The sight of the burning body amid the gloom lying heavy in that part of the forecastle was inexpressibly terrible. For a minute the seamen looked on and then fled, uttering cries of horror. The uproar attracted the attention of the mate, who came forward halloaing to know what the noise was about. He was told that there was the dead body of a sailor burning in the forecastle.

"Burning!" he exclaimed scornfully, and entered the place, followed by two or three of the men; but on catching sight of the figure luminous with the flames,

whose lustre exhibited the pinched and gaping features of the corpse, just as one might witness objects floating on the surface of burning brandy, he came to a stand, giant as he was, with a groan of horror. The delicate creeping of the faint blue flames made the dreadful face seem to be grinning at the ship's side at which it stared, with a struggle of the drawn lips to gibber out a fancy that should correspond with the look in that horrible countenance. The mate rallied. "This must be cleared out," cried he, "lend us a hand here." They smothered the body in a blanket, carried it on deck, and hove it overboard.

In due course the ship arrived at Liverpool. The impression that had been created by this tragic incident upon the sailors had long before faded off their reckless, easy-going minds. It was then the practice of American vessels to board their crews out whilst lying at Liverpool, and the men of this particular ship, in talking of the voyage with the strangers they met, mentioned the affair of the sailor catching fire and slowly burning up out of the spirituous leakage of his pores. In this way the story got abroad, but in those days there were much darker wonders than this happening on board ship, and the hideous incident apparently gained but little attention.

The vessel, having discharged her cargo, loaded for a South American port. Shortly before she sailed three of the old crew deserted, and their place was supplied by new men. One of these fellows, on hearing the story of the burning sailor, declared that, had he known such a thing had happened aboard the vessel, he would never have shipped in her. He told several stories of haunted ships, and exhibited so much uneasiness when below in the forecastle at night that his fears begot a

like alarm amongst the others, in spite of the early impression having been almost effaced. One night this fellow, who was at the wheel, called to the second mate, who had returned to the quarter-deck from forward, and said that he had seen a figure of a man, shining like phosphorescent water, come up out of the companion hatch and walk overboard. The second mate, a lean and yellow Yankee, hove a curse at him for carrying more eyes in his head than he had need of; but the man's earnestness nevertheless had produced an effect, and the officer presently looked down the skylight, then entered the cabin, then returned, and hung about the wheel with a certain uneasiness in his manner.

However, the sailor reported the spectre to his mates when he got forward. He described the apparition very graphically—represented it as a yellow-haired man in a check shirt and dungaree trousers, his breast bare and on fire, his features thin, a yellow goatee on his chin, and his lean and ghastly countenance grinning and writhing, as it were, to the creeping of the pale blue flames. The sailors recognized the likeness at once; their uneasiness was deepened; they hung about in couples during the night watches, and it came to their always going aloft in twos—for such light work, I mean, as loosing a royal or topgallant-sail.

This went on till the ship was in the tropics, by which time the superstitious sailor had ended in persuading most of the men that the vessel was haunted by the luminous ghost of the burning body they had hove overboard.

One night was very quiet and dark, a mere fanning of air blowing over the taff-rail, the stars few and making no light, and the ocean spreading into the black-

ness of the horizon dark and ungleaming as polished ebony. It was seven bells—half-past eleven in the first watch. The second mate was in charge of the deck, and was stumping the planks by the gangway, whilst the captain, who had come up for the cool of the night half an hour before, stood near the binnacle smoking a cigar.

All on a sudden a most unearthly shriek sounded forward. The men who were nodding about the decks sprang to their feet; the cry was repeated, a wild, most ear-piercing note of torment and terror, and a moment after there was a rush of figures out of the forecastle—the whole of the watch below, in fact, who streamed out like a troop of lunatics suddenly enlarged.

What was it?

Some of them gasped out that the crimp's dead man was sitting all on fire in his bunk in the bows. It was he that had uttered the horrible cry, and at sight of the soul-subduing apparition the stoutest had bundled out of their beds and bolted. The captain called to the second mate to accompany him forward to view the spectre; but ere the couple had progressed a dozen paces the figure of a man, naked to the waist, his breast, arms, and face shining like a corposant, rose out of the hatch in the forecastle deck, and, walking, or rather floating as it seemed, to the fore rigging, mounted the shrouds.

The sight was stupefying. Captain and second mate came to a halt, as though blasted by a stroke of lightning, and there they stood, with the rest of the ship's company, staring with open mouths and glistening brows, amidst a deep silence, at the luminous figure that rose from ratline to ratline, as though it soared. Presently, climbing over the futtock shrouds, where,

as the spectral thing lay backwards to the angle of the irons, it showed against the blackness a most clearly limned configuration of the upper half of a human shape, as though drawn with a brush dipped in phosphorus, it gained the top, as the platform at the head of the lower mast is called, and disappeared.

That this was the ghost of the crimp's dead seaman no living man aboard that ship, from the captain down to the youngest boy, could for an instant doubt. The master and mates shared the terrors of the men; the seamen refused to occupy the forecastle, and the watch off duty was allowed to lie in the state cabin at night. The sailors were almost too frightened to do the necessary ship's work, and from the date of the apparition the master regularly kept the vessel under small canvas after sundown to lighten the obligation of going aloft during the darkness.

On their arrival at Rio the whole of the crew deserted, and both mates followed in their tail, swearing that nothing should ever prevail upon them to sail in company with the devil. Whether the captain managed to obtain a fresh crew I do not know.

It was long before the true story of the apparition of the burning sailor was made known, and then it was delivered as a hospital yarn by a sailor lying sick and dying of consumption. He said that he was one of the three fresh hands that had been shipped at Liverpool. He had heard all about the crimp's dead sailor before he had joined the vessel, and made up his mind to play a wild practical joke. He provided himself with a quantity of phosphorus, and, grasping the double opportunity of the warm weather and of his mates snoring in their bunks, he stripped to the waist, coated his chest and face and arms with the luminous stuff, and, seating

himself in the bunk that had been occupied by the dead man, he uttered the terrifying howl which had been heard on the quarter-deck, satisfied by the state of mind to which he had reduced his mates by his previous talk, that in no way could he better summon the sleepers to awaken to the spectacle he had prepared for them. He had reckoned upon their flight, and having emptied the forecastle, he mounted through the scuttle, and ascended the rigging to the top, where he had placed his shirt and cap. By dressing himself he concealed his glittering skin, and then very swiftly he descended to the deck, hand over hand, by the foretopsail sheets or some such gear before the mast there, whence he sneaked unobserved into the port forechains, where he lingered till he had cleansed himself of his fiery appearance. The general consternation had been so great that no one noticed his absence, whilst, all eyes being directed aloft, his passage across the deck to the channels had been unobserved.

But long before this confession was made, it had been discovered that the fellow, whom the crimp at New York had smuggled aboard as a drunken man, was dead when he was brought to the ship, that the crimp knew he was dead, and that his object in conveying the corpse to the vessel was to obtain the sailor's advance-money.

*SPANISH ARMADA.**

As the curtain of memory rises upon the most majestic, if not the most glorious, of the conflicts in all maritime history, the very first scene disclosed is hardly less noteworthy than the most impressive of the features of the mighty marine piece. It is a clear summer night; the stars are bright, and spangle the fine liquid dusk down to the sea-line; but in the far east there is the green faintness of the lunar dawn, and the black line of the rolling horizon stands out against it as though wrought by the sweep of a brush steeped in India ink. A pinnace of those days, a little sailing craft of some hundred tons, let us call it, is buzzing through the dark waters, with her head east-north-east for Plymouth town. She is a piratical craft, with the Jolly Roger for her bunting, and is commanded by Master Thomas Fleming, a hardy Scotsman. He is short of victuals and water, and his ship besides has been somewhat roughly handled by successive gales of wind; so he is homeward bound, after a tedious and idle filibustering cruise. But it is for something more than the mere design of filling his casks and re-stocking his tierces that he is speeding for the English coast under every press of cloth he can spread abroad. For it is only just now that, whilst standing near the tiller looking to windward, with the weatherly eye of a sailor ever on the watch for a change, he took

* A commemorative paper, *Daily Telegraph*, June, 1888.

notice of a blot of blackness making a deeper dye upon the shadow of the night far down in the south. And away past it he descried such another blotch, and yet another and another still, and so on through a range of hard upon two leagues of seaboard; showing, all of them, like the shoulders of black clouds lifting slowly to the stars, with a compacted mass of vapour to follow.

But Fleming was born in a land that breeds the finest race of sailors in the world, besides having served a long apprenticeship to the business of keeping a bright look-out for prizes. It was impossible he could be mistaken. Every instinct of the mariner in him gave him warning; indeed, it was in full cry at a breath. 'Twas the Spaniard coming, by Our Lady! Those dusky loomings were ships, and nothing else. They were the swelling canvas of the mighty galleons and huge carracks of the Don. So it was "crack on all" with the pirate, and "buzz away" with him to Plymouth town to give the news, as nimbly as ever the soft summer night-wind could blow his little round-bowed craft along. The mere fancy of the fate of England hanging upon that small craft, swinging her quaint form over the long swells of the Atlantic rolling northwards to the narrow seas, should make a man hold his breath, even three hundred years afterwards, for a moment, as he thinks how it might have been with this tight little island but for the alertness of that piratical, patriotic old Scotsman, willing to heave overboard all sulky prejudice against England, all sullen resentment over the beheading of Queen Mary, at sight of yonder dusky challenge to his heart as a Briton. England lay sleeping restfully after months of bitter disquiet. Master Thomas Fleming knew that. His own suspicions had been lulled, though he had hung much about the Spanish seaboard. The mighty

fleet had sailed from the Tagus; but the news of its having been dispersed by a tempest that had wrecked three of the Portuguese galleys, dismasted eight of the bigger ships, and forced the Duke of Medina-Sidonia, with such as were visible of his Armada clinging to his skirts, into the Bay of Corunna, there to refresh and to ship more soldiers, was already old. Fleming, picking up the gossip, as he cruised here and there, knew that the British High Admiral, the Lord Charles Howard, had received her Majesty's commands to send four of her tallest and strongest ships to Chatham for repairs and re-equipment, as it was the Queen's belief that the Spanish fleet had no present intention of putting to sea. The pirate was also aware that many of the British ships lying at Plymouth were in a partially dismantled condition, the crews ashore, sails unbent, rigging unrove; and that the fate of the nation was sealed, if the stems of the Don's mighty galleons struck our English home-waters before the noble Howard could be apprised of the enemy's approach. This wonderful passage of our national story grows confused presently with the intermingling of contending vessels, disjointed murderous struggles, the flames of fire ships, the rage of battle slowly trending, like a pall of gunpowder smoke, from abreast of the Start to the white terraces of the Forelands. But that incident of Fleming, that detail of his little pinnace seeming to yearn, in her swelling canvas, with the same wild longing to make haste that animated the spirit of the pirate, stands out bright and sharp in its isolation. One sees the figure of the man, in slouched hat, short cloak, belted doublet, jack-boots, spiked beard, and moustachios curled upon his cheeks, standing at the rail of his humming craft, and sending a falcon glance under the

sharp of his hand into the southern dusk, where the loom of a hundred dark shadows break the continuity of the sea-line there.

It was at four o'clock in the afternoon on July 19, according to the old writers, that Master Thomas Fleming, being arrived at Plymouth Sound, rowed to the Lord High Admiral and told him that the Spaniard was close aboard, sailing large under towers of canvas, a vast, incredible multitude of him. It is three hundred years ago, but the variations of human nature are as the polaric changes of the compass, slow, with a steadfast recurrence to the old bearings; and nothing is easier than to imagine to-day what the feeling then was when Fleming delivered his report. There is an old story of Sir Francis Drake leisurely completing his game of bowls, after a glance of indifference seawards. It is a good tale for the marines. There is no illustration in all naval history that so gloriously expressed the English seaman's genius of promptitude as the despatch Howard and his men exhibited in making ready to prepare for sea and confront the enemy. A large number of the sailors and soldiers belonging to the Royal ships were ashore, as Fleming had heard; yet before darkness had settled down that same night the admiral was lying ready with six ships, waiting for the morning to break for others to join him. They arrived in twos and threes, and assuredly not one moment too soon; for at midday the Armada hove into view, whitening in a crescent seven miles of sea with its flowing canvas, and glorifying the blue of the sky beyond it with the radiance of fluttering pennons. The enemy's strength was well known. It had been circulated long before in printed copies, doubtless with the intention of paralyzing the spirit of the English. The

description had been dated May 20, and subsequent gales of wind had scarcely rendered its modification needful. The Happy Armada then, as it was styled, consisted of 130 ships, expressing an aggregate of close upon 58,000 tons. It was manned by over 19,000 soldiers, 8450 marines, above 2000 slaves, and armed with 2,630 pieces of cannon. The tenders to this fleet, loaded to their ways with a prodigious quantity of arms and ammunition, formed of themselves a considerable armada besides. In addition to the soldiers and sailors there were upwards of 180 monks of several orders, together with 124 volunteers, who represented the noblest blood in old Spain. It is impossible out of mere figures to collect even a poor notion of dimensions, of aspect, of the hundred formidable elements which went to the composition of the vast unwieldy structures of this enormous fleet. There were several fifty-gun ships. Don Pedro de Valdez's vessel was of 1550 tons burden, carried 304 fighting men, besides 118 sailors. There were pinnaces that rose to the burden of 876 tons. The *Saint Martin,* the galleon commanded by the Captain-General, was of 1000 tons. There were huge galleasses besides, armed each with fifty pieces of cannon, and manned by an army of soldiers and sailors. One obtains some idea of their bulk on reading that "they contained within them chambers, chapels, turrets, pulpits, and other commodities of great houses." They were propelled with oars by 300 slaves, and, in common with most of the other vessels of Portugal, Biscay, Andalusia, Castille, and the contributory provinces, they were "furnished and beautified with trumpets, streamers, banners, warlike ensigns, and other such-like ornaments."

It was hardly guessed yet, perhaps, by the crowds

who viewed that vast floating crescent of white cloths and shining banners from the Devon and Cornwall heights that, but for the blundering of its pilots, by which the Lizard had been mistaken for Rame's Head, Plymouth Sound would even on the yester eve have been crowded with those cathedral-like galleons, whilst the shining armour and gaudy raiment of His Most Catholic Majesty's troops would have gleamed on the rise of the inland moor, or glittered betwixt the hedge-rows of the fair summer country. The spectator, to have found heart, must have needed the deepest and most enthusiastic faith in the courage of the English seaman when, from some Plymouth eminence, he carried his eye from the slender squadron just outside the harbour to the immense flotilla whose south-easternmost wing showed in dim dashes of light against the blue of the horizon, so wide apart were the horns of this unparalleled arc. Yet one may say, with all memory strong in one of such men as Benbow, Blake, Howe, Nelson, that never did British-built structures hold so valiant and noble a company of English sailors as those who chased, fought, harassed, and defeated the Don during those nine subsequent days of thunderous conflict. Sir William Monson, who was eighteen years of age in 1588, and who served, it is said, as a common sailor aboard the *Charles*, a pinnace that was engaged in the great fight, tells us that when even the whole resources of the country had come to the help of her mariners there was not above 120 sail of men-of-war to encounter that Invincible Armada, and not above five of them all, except the largest of the Royal ships, which were of 200 tons burden. It was our seamen, he says, who by their experience and courage were the cause of our victories; not the ships,

though elsewhere in his admirable "Naval Tracts" this fine old admiral says that, big as the Spanish galleons were, he would rather have fought them in a vessel of 200 tons, manned by a crew of 100 Englishmen, than in the biggest of the galleons have engaged the same Englishmen with a company under him of 1000 Spanish soldiers and sailors. One needs but glance at the flags flying from the British mastheads to comprehend the certainty of the issue. The pious chroniclers of those times attribute a great deal to the weather; but it is not too much to say that neither the glorious First of June nor Trafalgar itself exhibits instances of fiercer fighting than does this three hundred year old nine days' rage of battle. Charles Howard, of the ducal house of Norfolk, was the Lord High Admiral. The scientific discipline of modern times renders the strategic manœuvres of this noble gentleman somewhat primitive, but no sailor who narrowly follows the movements of the English in this series of engagements but must recognize in Charles Howard as fine an expression of naval genius, as remarkable a combination of every quality which enters into the composition of a great admiral as our maritime annals anywhere offer. Sir Francis Drake was next in command, still bronzed by the suns of the Pacific Ocean, whose mysterious solitudes he was the first Englishman to penetrate. His name alone was worth a score of galleons in its terror-striking influence over the Spanish spirit. Fresh from his easy and cheerful burning of 10,000 tons of shipping at Cadiz, he might be one of the few commanders over whom floated the English colours who could contemplate the result of the approaching strife without the least stir of uneasiness or misgiving. There was Martin Frobisher, again, the hardiest of Yorkshiremen, the most

intrepid of seamen, with a body toughened to the inflexibility of his spirit by the Arctic blasts that had obstructed his exploration for the North-West Passage. There was the lion-hearted Edward Fenton, who had been captain of the *Gabriel* in Frobisher's expedition, and who had studied the secrets of his profession, not under the comfortable shining of Spanish suns, but amidst the wild ice-plains of the north and the high surge and desperate gales of the Norwegian heights. There was John Hawkins, he who had fired upon the Spanish admiral, who was to bring Ann of Austria from Flanders, for endeavouring to sneak out of Cattwater without saluting the symbol of Britannia's domination of the deep; the hero of the amazing, if disastrous, expedition of the *Jesus of Lubeck*, and, after Drake, the most famous seaman of his age. There were many other renowned and capable men, but the list is too long to exhaust.

It is pleasant to follow Sir William Monson in his brief reference to this famous Armada battle. The mere feeling that he bore a part in the tremendous conflict, young as he was, causes one to read his obscure page as though he were some ancient survivor of the heroic company talking to us out of his armchair about what he saw and did. You get the same feeling in reading Emanuel van Meteran's relation of the fight in the black letter copy of "Hackluyt," printed in 1598—ten years afterwards; as fresh almost as a newspaper version of a battle two days' old in these times, so slow were people's movements then as compared with our activity. The *Ark Royal* carried the admiral's flag; Drake commanded the *Revenge*, Hawkins the *Victory*, Lord Thomas Howard the *Lyon*, Lord Sheffield the *Bear*, Sir Robert Southwell the *Elizabeth Jones*, Frobisher the *Triumph*. The *Hope*, the *Bonaventure*, the *Dreadnaught*,

the *Nonpareille*, the *Swiftsure*, the *Rainbow*, the *Vauntguard*, the *Mary Rose* were the names of others. There were besides the *Nory*, the *Spy*, the *Moon*, the *Charles*, the *Bull*, the *Scout*, the *Tyger*, the *Swallow*, with a few more of the smaller fry. Historic names go to the commanding even of these lesser craft, such as Lord Henry Seymour, Fenner, Cross, Richard Hawkins, the two Wentworths, Fenton, Clifford, and others. Later on the English fleet was reinforced by privately equipped ships, "in which number," says the black letter account, "there were many great and honourable personages, as —namely, the Earles of Oxford, of Northumberland, of Cumberland, etc., with many knights and gentlemen: to wit, Sir Thomas Cecill, Sir Robert Cecill, Sir Walter Raleigh, Sir William Hatton," and some scores besides. All England indeed flocked seawards. Upon the South Coast were cantoned 20,000 men; an army of 22,000 foot and 1000 horse was encamped near Tilbury, and for the guarding of the Queen's person was a third army of 32,000 foot and 4000 horse, all picked men.

In this age of colossal ordnance, it is perhaps excusable to recur somewhat slightingly to the primitive death-smiting engines of three hundred years ago. But do not let us suppose for a moment that the genius of murder was not horribly consummate in its way even in those days. Conflicts meant a species of butchery which the world is happy in regarding as one of the lost arts. The largest gun a ship then carried was called a demy cannon; but then this weapon weighed 400 lbs., its bore was $6\frac{3}{4}$ ins., it threw a shot weighing 30 lbs., could send its missile 1700 paces, and was loaded with 18 lbs. of powder. Next was the cannon petro, that carried a 24 lb. shot; the culverin, a 17 lb. shot; the basilisk, a 15 lb. shot, and so on, down to the

little serpentine and rabenet, which threw respectively shots weighing three-quarters of a pound and half a pound. Here, then, were broadside armaments capable almost of equalling the thunders of Trafalgar and of rivalling the execution done by the gunners of Nelson. But they fought in those days with other destructive engines as well; they discharged flaming arrows of wildfire; they boarded with pikes blazing with the same inextinguishable stuff. From the ship's sides, or from her enormous tops, they flung brass balls and earthen pots filled with powder and bullets stuck in pitch, which made an incredible slaughter when hurled amongst the surging crowd of combatants. They suspended barrels of powder at their yard-arms, ready to let fall upon the enemy's deck as the ship rubbed sides together, where they burst as though the powder-room had blown up, scattering death right and left, and confounding and terrifying the seamen with the deafening blasts of the explosion. They also flung contrivances filled with a chemical composition that, as it burnt, threw out thick coils of black smoke of a stench so nauseating, of a character so poisonous that, in order to breathe, men were obliged to fly from their quarters. For as wild a picture of marine conflict as the imagination could desire, it might not be necessary to look outside that period. The great galleons of the Spaniard bristled with ordnance, they floated like vast castles upon the sea, and as we know from the annals of this Armada, from the voyage of Anson, from the experiences of English freebooters, they were almost inaccessible by boarders. Their tops were crowded by men who maintained an incessant fire with their matchlocks upon the enemy's decks; others discharged flaming arrows at the sails and hull of the opposing craft. An army

of soldiers secreted in close quarters, showed their heads only after a broadside to flash back their response to the challenge. To the quarter-deck something of the colour of the mediæval field of battle was communicated by the figures of the generals, the admirals, the commanders, and officers in suits of armour. There was stateliness, indeed, in the castellated fabrics, with their great poop lanthorns, stern windows, the gilded devices on the counter sparkling to the sunlight; in the milk-white softness of the huge spread of canvas enriched by steamers whose forked ends in calm fluttered the whole length of the masthead to the deck; in the gleam of accoutrements, the radiant hues of romantic apparel, the rich and lustrous symbolism of the figure-head; in the garnishing of the broad decks by the colours of the varied attire of the slave, the soldier, the mariner, the monk, and the commander. But the shipboard discipline of the Spaniard was but an extension of the tactics of the battlefield. The prejudices of the tented plain were always strong for him. He went to sea as a soldier in a castle, and the English could not but ridicule a marine theory that reduced the Jacks of the ship to a condition of subordinacy that rendered them even of less worth in the eyes of the commanders than the slaves who tugged at the long sweeps of the galleys. Our sailors laughed, too, at qualities of superstition which might have crippled the resolution of a forecastle of landsmen even. The Spaniard's watchwords were the saints. He was allowed but six meals of flesh in a year. The slaves who helped him to fight were fed on oil, on rice, and on beans. These, surely, were not the sort of folks to conquer England, that the Duke of Parma might take the place of noble Queen Bess!

On the arrival of Fleming, as we have seen, with

news of the mighty Spanish armament close in soundings and heading direct for the English coast, the Lord High Admiral had, with incredible activity, himself working with his own hands far into the night, got ready six ships, which, by noon next day, had been reinforced to the number of thirty. They lay quiet, waiting for the Spaniard to pass away to leeward. It blew a pleasant breeze of wind from a little to the southward of west, and the Armada swept softly, cloud-like over the pale blue of the Channel waters as though it were the magnified reflection in that rippling mirror of the new moon hanging directly overhead. The galleons, carracks, and pollacres which formed the northern horn of the seven-mile semicircle had doubtless a good view of the thirty English craft, many of them very little ships, with their topsails aback, or their anchors, maybe, down, resting quietly within the yawn of the points which form Plymouth Sound; and their hardy sailors, soldiers, and slaves might well flatter themselves with the assurance that, if yonder toys represented the naval strength of England, the realm might already be regarded as vanquished and re-Catholicized. They were not to know, however, that amongst the most ardent of the men who were prepared dearly to sell their lives for the old country were those same Roman Catholics on whose sympathy and support the Spanish monarch and the Duke of Parma largely counted. It is true that the account in Purchas says, "The principal recusants (lest they should stir up any tumult in the time of the Spanish invasion) were sent to remain at certain convenient places, as, namely, in the Isle of Ely and at Wisbeach." But we also have it on high contemporary authority, "that even the Papists whom the Spaniards expected to have found

in arms were glad to wipe away the aspersions which had been thrown upon them, by serving as common soldiers." The story of the first assault is vague. Howard waited until the Armada had travelled a little space up Channel, and then his thirty ships braced up, having now the weather-guage of the enemy, and started for him. The encounter was brisk, many broadsides were exchanged, but there does not appear to have been anything decisive in this action. Next day, July 21, proved more mischievous for the Don. The English fleet was still further strengthened by arrival of ships, and approached within musket-shot of the enemy, Lord Charles Howard singling out and hotly engaging the Spanish Vice-Admiral. It needed but a very little manœuvring to show that whilst the advantage of strength of fabric and weight of broadside metal was altogether with the Spaniards, seamanship and nimbleness of heels were the happy possessions of the English. So high did the Spanish galleons float out of water that their people found it impossible to depress their guns so as to bring them to bear upon the decks and hulls of the English ships. Their shots flew high, sweeping betwixt the masts above the topsail yards. Indeed, it was more like a cutting-out job than an action fought broadside to broadside. One's triumph in the conflict is mingled with a sentiment of pity. They had some stout sea-captains in that Armada; but think of the confrontment of Castilian marine prowess with such iron hearts as Drake, as Frobisher, as Hawkins, as Fenton; men whose veins ran with salt water, the most exquisite seamen of their time, of an intrepidity that is almost phenomenal, with the animation of real scorn for the Spaniard as an ocean foeman tingling in every fibre of their tough and oak-

like natures! Think, too, of the comparative helplessness of a vast body of soldiers crowded betwixt the bulwarks of the mountainous timber castles, perhaps twice as long as they were broad, with a mere handful of seamen to work the ship—men whose services were so little valued that, as Monson tells us, they would be kept aloft furling and making sail, exposed to the hot sharp-shooting of the foe until, as a matter of fact, ere the engagement had scarcely made fair progress, two-thirds of the seamen lay dead on the deck or were floating mangled corpses alongside! There was rage, there was burning patriotism, there was the old unbending resolution to conquer amongst the English; but there must have been something of disdain too. The leviathan tubs scarce answering their helm, halliards shot through, and hardly a seaman surviving to tell the soldiers what to do; the priests confessing the dying and exhorting the living, the black visages of the slaves whose hearts were assuredly not with their masters, the ducking of heads past the bulwark line to every broadside in the true old Spanish fashion—no! those Jacks of the Elizabethan day could not, amidst the stress and heat and uproar of the battle, view such an enemy as the Don, wallowing in his cliff-high castle, without contempt of him as a sailor falling cool upon their wrath, though scorn might give a new nerve to the swing of the flaming pike, and a deadlier precision to the aim of the cannon-petro.

The Spaniards speedily saw how it was. The nimbleness of the English craft was like the waltz of the running surge around their ponderous waggons; there was nothing for it but to shorten sail and come together in a body and defy the English with that half-moon front, which might have been a very excellent

tactic, had it proved so. One of their great galleasses was so furiously hammered that the signal flew for as many of the fleet as could approach to gather round and save her; with the result that Don Pedro de Valdez's enormous galleon fell foul of another ship, carried away her foremast, and dropped to leeward out of the battle. Howard, spying this ship, concluded that she was abandoned, though in reality she was full of men all in hiding, no doubt, and sailed past her with the design of keeping the rest of the Spanish fleet in view all night; but next day, being the 22nd, Sir Francis Drake fell in with her. He sent his pinnace and discovered that the great Pedro de Valdez himself was on board, along with a company of four hundred and fifty people, many of them noblemen. Drake was an old hand with the Don, and ordered Valdez to yield. The Spaniard was for making terms, upon which Drake informed him that he had no leisure now for ceremonies of any kind, that if he yielded himself he would receive friendly treatment, but that, "If he had resolved to die in fight, he should prove Drake to be no dastard." The mere utterance of Drake's name acted magically—indeed, Valdez and his companions had not known until now who was the Englishman that had hailed them. The memory of Cadiz was fresh, Drake's West Indian reputation, too, was equally green. Without an instant's hesitation Valdez struck, and went on board Drake's ship with his retinue of fifty noblemen and gentlemen. How Valdez kissed Drake's hand, how he protested his good fortune in having fallen into the power of one who was as famous for his gentleness to the vanquished as for his courage and expertness in battle, how Sir Francis embraced him, handsomely entertained him at his own table, and comfortably lodged him in his private cabin

is known to all. On that same day a Spanish ship, commanded by the vice-admiral of the whole fleet, was burnt down to her powder-room without exploding, though her people were miserably scorched. Needless to say she was promptly taken in tow by the English.

It is strange to notice how little this mighty conflict scatters. One might imagine that such a mass of shipping as is here assembled would have covered nearly the whole range of the English Channel with contending craft in twos and threes; but all the while the Spaniards seemed to keep together in a lump, with the English ordnance flashing through their closed ranks, and brilliantly handled vessels, big and little, flying English colours, snapping at their heels like wolves, and tearing first one and then another down. The bitterest, the most furious conflict of all, was on the 23rd, when the Lord Howard found himself in the thick of the enemy, almost abandoned, though there was no intermission in the roar of his broadsides. Presently falling within hail of Captain Fenner, who was in command of the *Swiftsure*, he cried out, "Oh, George, what doest thou? Wilt thou now frustrate my hope and opinion conceived of thee? Wilt thou forsake me now?" on which, says the old account, Fenner "approached forthwith, encountered the enemy, and did the part of a most valiant captain." In this action a large Venetian ship and several small vessels were captured by the English. Meanwhile almost every hour of the day was bringing fresh vessels to the rescue from English ports. By the time the fleets had arrived abreast of Dover the English ships amounted some say to one hundred and thirty, though so small was the bulk of them that, with the exception of three and twenty belonging to the Queen, not one but seemed ridiculously disproportioned for the conflict she had been fitted out to undertake.

There must have been much ungodly scoffing amongst the English when, the great running battle being over and all sorts of news filtering into this country drop by drop, it came to be known that the Duke of Parma, not questioning but that he should be crowned King of England by Cardinal Allan, had travelled several leagues that he might make some preliminary "bowes," according to Hackluyt, and "vows," according to Purchas, "unto Saint Mary of Hall in Henault (whom he went to visite for his blinde devotions sake)," and how, this duty being discharged, he had journeyed to Dunkirk simply to learn, not only out of the mouths of cannon roaring seaward, but from the crowds in the streets of the town, that the Spaniards were being slowly, but surely, knocked to pieces. We were fighting the Dutch very hotly indeed in these same waters not long afterwards, but they were serving us astonishingly well now. Lord Henry Seymour, cruising on the coast of Flanders, was nobly supported by Count Nassau. The business of checkmating the Duke of Parma was entrusted to the sturdy broad-beamed Hans Butterboxes, as Charles II. loved to call the Dutch, and with the characteristic thoroughness of that plodding and much-to-be-admired people was that obligation fulfilled. In truth, the duke's people were so honestly terrified by the sight of the Holland and Zealand ships that day and night the business of desertion proceeded as regularly as the ebb of the tide. The spectacle of the flat-bottomed boats was too much for the disheartened creatures. How on earth were they to break through those floating batteries, lying yonder under the shadow of the horizontal tri-colour in fabrics as flat as spoons, and as ungovernable as a barge adrift on a running river? So they wisely took to their heels,

and we hear no more of them. Meanwhile, the English continued to pound the Spaniard with their great ordnance and flaming missiles. The Dons retorted handsomely, but their shots flew so high that our Jacks might have imagined they were bombarding the heavens. It was a dead calm on the 24th; the towering vessels lay lifeless, slewing slowly to every compass point with the fingering of the tide, and the reflection of their shining canvas lay under each bristling hull in a waving sheet of silver. But the enemy had four great galleasses, with an army of slaves for the multitudinous oars of each of them, and these craft, heavily armed, and crowded with fighting men, made for the Queen's ships, but without the least result, saving that they, on their part, were most cruelly mauled by the chain-shot our demi-cannon hurled at them. Day after day was this great fight waged, slowly rolling up Channel, and there was no point of British coast from Bolt Head to Dungeness that did not echo the thunder of the contending fleets. To follow the conflict in its close details would demand such space as cannot be afforded here. There was a terrible fight on the 25th, the ships being abreast of the Isle of Wight, when the *Lyon* (Captain Lord Thomas Howard), the *Elizabeth Jonas* (Captain Sir Robert Southwell), the *Bear* (Captain Lord Sheffield), the *Victory* (Captain Barker), and the galleon *Leicester* (Captain George Fenner) sheared desperately into the very heart of the Spanish fleet, engaging the enormous carracks within a hundred yards, firing so rapidly that their broadsides were like volcanic upheavals, flame after flame with scarce an intermission, until the tormented Spaniards tailed on to their topsail halliards to compact their timber-castles into an impenetrable front. It was on this

occasion that Master John Hawkins and honest Captain Frobisher were with others rewarded by the Lord High Admiral with the order of knighthood. That same day the false ironical rumour spread like wildfire from sea to land that the Spaniards had conquered England! On the 27th the Spaniards at sunset had hauled into Calais Roads and let go their anchors, intending presently to push on for Dunkirk, where—for they were still buoyed up by vain hopes—they believed the forces of the Duke of Parma would join them. It was now that Lord Henry Seymour united his little fleet with that of the Lord High Admiral; and it was on this day that the noble Howard was directed by letters from her Majesty the Queen to drive the Spanish fleet from Calais. The Sovereign knew her sailors, and was fearless in the instructions she gave them. Thereupon, the next day being Sunday—that is to say, at two o'clock on Sunday morning—the night being dark, and an inshore wind blowing dead upon the Spanish fleet along with a strong wash of tide, the Lord Admiral of England let slip some fire-ships in charge of two bold captains, Young and Prowse. They drove accurately into the thick of the Don, blazing wildly, vomiting shot the while from heavy cannon which had been loaded to the muzzles. It is the wildest of all the scenes of this mighty show: sky and sea lighted up for leagues by the high and writhing flames of the fire-ships, with the yellow-tinctured phantasms of near and distant Spanish galleons hurriedly and confusedly getting under way, cutting their hemp cables, toiling at brace and halliard, with the wild and agitated shouts and cries of the armies of soldiers, mariners, slaves, and priests rolling shorewards upon the damp night wind, with a sound as of sullen moaning of breakers.

But the end was not yet, though near at hand. A great galleas stranded, and the English made for her, but were driven from their prey by the heavy ordnance of the Calais batteries. There was another desperate fight on the 29th, off Gravelines, and it is impossible to follow even three hundred years later the superb seamanship of the English on this occasion without something of those emotions of triumph and pride which must have swelled the hearts of the contemporaries of Drake and Frobisher. Three great Spanish ships were sunk, two big Portuguese galleons abandoned; and vast mischief in other ways done to the Don. And now still on this same 29th we witness the Spaniards running, with the English in full pursuit. The cloths they spread were warrant enough that their stomach was gone, and that they had had enough. Lord Henry Seymour with his squadron clung to the coast of Flanders to hold the Duke of Parma idle, whilst Lord Charles Howard pursued the Spaniards into the North Sea, to as high as 57 degrees of latitude. He then quietly shifted his helm for home, making little doubt that the Norwegian and Hebridean surge, with the weather of Cape Wrath and the bewildering navigation of the islands round about, would effectually complete the work he and his hearts of oak had begun. No schoolboy but knows what follows: how there came on to blow a succession of heavy gales, which drove upwards of thirty ships ashore on the Irish coast, with the loss of many thousands of men; how of all that Invincible Armada, twenty-five vessels only, with the Duke of Medina-Sidonia aboard one of them, yet alive to relate the incredible tale of disaster, succeeded in making the Bay of Biscay; how many large ships were lost upon the Western Isles and upon the coast of Argyleshire.

The story is old indeed, but the occurrence of its anniversary renders even an insufficient reference to it a justifiable expression of patriotic pride. It is a marine pageant fitly, nobly, gloriously closed by that quaint old spectacle of queenly, national, and civic thanksgiving, to the sight of which we are admitted by the grace and diligence of the old chroniclers. "Likewise the Queenes Maiesty herself, imitating the ancient Romans, rode into London in triumph, in regard of her own and her subjects glorious deliverance. For being attended upon very solemnly by all the principal estates and officers of her Realme, she was carried thorow her said Citie of London in a triumphant chariot, and in robes of triumph, and from her Palace into the Cathedrall Church of Saint Paul, out of which the ensigns and colours of the vanquished Spaniards hung displayed. And all the Citizens of London in their Liveries stood on either side of the streets, by their seurall Companies, with their Ensigns and Banners; and the streets were hanged on both sides with blew cloath, which, together with the foresaid Banners, yielded a very stately and gallant prospect. Her Maiesty being entered into the church, together with her Clergy and Nobles, gave thanks unto God, and caused a publike Sermon to be preached before her at Pauls Crosse; wherein none other argument was handled, but that praise, honour, and glory might be rendered unto God; and that God's name might be extolled by thanksgiving. And with her own Pryncely voyce she most Christianly exhorted the people to do the same: whereupon the people with a loud acclamation wished her a most long and happy life, to the confusion of her foes."

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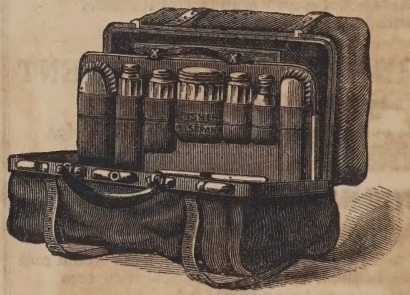

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